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MODERN PAINTERS

VOL. II

"OF IDEAS OF BEAUTY"

AND

"OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY"

By JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.,

HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD; HONORARY FELLOW OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD; AND SLADE PROFESSOR OF FINE ART, OXFORD

. . . . . "Accuse me not
Of arrogance, ...
If, having walked with Nature,
And offered, far as frailty would allow,
My heart a daily sacrifice to Truth,
I now affirm of Nature and of Truth,
Whom I have served, that their Divinity
Revolts, offended at the ways of men.
Philosophers, who, though the human soul
Be of a thousand faculties composed,
And twice ten thousand interests, do yet prize
This soul, and the transcendent universe,
No more than as a mirror that reflects
To proud Self-love her own intelligence."

WORDSWORTH

RE-ARRANGED IN TWO VOLUMES, AND REVISED BY THE AUTHOR

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY CHARLES ELIOT NORTON

33235

VOL. II

BRANTWOOD EDITION

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1893

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

MR. GEORGE ALLEN *begs to announce that Ruskin's Works will hereafter be published in America by* MESSRS. CHARLES E. MERRILL & CO., *of New York, who will issue the only authorized editions.*

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MODERN PAINTERS.

PART III.

OF THE IMAGINATIVE FACULTY

INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

In revising this terminal division of my former second volume, I find less to be corrected or condemned than in the previous chapters; but far more, were it conveniently now possible, to be supplied. The treatment of this part of the subject is not only incomplete, but involves the omission of all the most important practical questions in the useless curiosity of analysis: just as a common anatomist describes the action of muscles in walking, without thereby helping anybody to walk; or those of a bird's wing in flying, without defining the angles of its stroke to the air. I have thus examined at tedious length the various actions of human conception and memory, without helping any one to conceive, or to remember; and, at least in this part of the book, scarcely touching at all on the primary questions (both moral and intellectual) how far the will has power over the imagination. It was perhaps in reality fortunate that I should not

have entered on these higher inquiries till I was older and more experienced; nor shall I now attempt to remedy such defects by hasty patching of the text or fortuitous addition of notes to it. One or two introductory observations may, however, make this imperfect essay more useful, so far as it reaches.

In the first place, the reader must be warned not to trouble himself with the distinctions, attempted, or alluded to, between Fancy and Imagination. The subject is jaded, the matter of it insignificant, and the settlement of it practically impossible, not merely because everybody has his own theory, but also because nobody ever states his own in terms on which other people are agreed. I am myself now entirely indifferent which word I use; and should say of a work of art that it was well "fancied," or well "invented," or well "imagined," with only some shades of different meaning in the application of the terms, rather dependent on the matter treated, than the power of mind involved in the treatment. I might agree with Sir Piercie Shafton that his doublet was well fancied, or that his figure of speech was well conceived, and might perhaps reserve the word "Imagined" for the design of an angel's dress by Giotto, or the choice of a simile by Dante. But such distinctions are scarcely more than varieties of courtesy or dignity in the use of words; and I could not in essential nature of faculty distinguish Sir Piercie's designing from Giotto's, except, as I said, with respect to the matter of it; and

the fixture of his attention rather on the dress than the angel. Briefly, the power of the human mind to invent circumstances, forms, or scenes, at its pleasure, may be generally and properly called "imagination;" while the especial power of intellect required to handle the different subjects of invention, varies in so many modes that it is of no use to try to find words for them. Sir Piercie (to keep to one example) is at no loss for new metaphors, or for new patterns of colour, but he is struck dumb when required to invent a story; and stands helpless by, hearing with mere amazement Mysie Happer's flowing relation to the enquiring landlord, "that Ball, her palfrey, had fallen by the way, because he had been over-wrought with carrying home the last melder of meal to the portioner of Longhope, and that she had turned in Ball to graze in the Taskers' Park, near Cripplecross, for he had stood as still as Lot's wife with very weariness; and that the knight had courteously insisted she should ride behind him, and that she had brought him to her kind friend's hostelry rather than to proud Peter Peddie's, who got his malt at the Mellerstane Mills; and that he must get the best the house afforded, and that he must get it ready in a moment of time, and that she was ready to help in the kitchen." It seems to me, indeed, probable, from my general experience, and observation, that the distinction thus implied by Scott between the gifts of ornamental design, and of circumstantial invention, may be well-grounded, and perhaps demonstrable

by a sufficient comparison of biographies; yet these faculties are usually possessed in the same relative proportion by great painters, so that the pictures most entertaining by their incidents are usually also the richest in their ornament; and certainly if Miss Edgeworth, in that unbounded faith in the directing power of education which she learnt from Johnson, had been one of the company on any of the happy days when Scott took Turner to show him the best views of the scenery of Abbotsford, she would assuredly, had the question been mooted, have maintained that Scott, had he chosen, might have been the brightest of landscape painters, and Turner, under better literary culture, have written the "Lady of the Lake."

But a far more important subject of enquiry than any respecting the various kinds or powers of imagination, is the degree in which all of them are subject to the control of the will, and liable to disease through the absence of direction and discipline. No attempt whatever, so far as I have observed, has yet been made by physicians to distinguish the morbid developments or disturbances of really strong intellectual powers, from those which result from conditions of weakness or deficiency in them; as, for instance, the ordinary spectre seen by most persons in states of feverish exhaustion, from the visions of over-excited religious or poetical fancy. In all cases when it is involuntary, the vision or imagination may be considered as morbid (unless

admitted to be supernatural); but even on the simplest principles of physical investigation, the visions of St. Paul or St. Anthony are not to be classed with those of common delirium, and still less, the powers which can be summoned at will, and directed to chosen objects, from those which enslave the conscience, and resist the reason of their possessor.

I scarcely now remember how far through a true sense of my inability at that time to deal with them adequately, or how far through imperfect sense of their importance, all these subjects of enquiry have been waived in the following essay, but I felicitate the reader on the neglect of which I am nevertheless myself ashamed; and believe that the conclusions arrived at are safer in their narrowness than they could have been in pretending to include the total field of investigation.

The reader must therefore remember throughout that the "Imagination" spoken of is meant only to include the healthy, voluntary, and necessary action of the highest powers of the human mind on subjects properly demanding and justifying their exertion; and that, without adopting, if he think them inaccurate, the terms I have used for any special kind of them, he may yet be helped, by the analysis I have given, to follow with more pleasurable interest the various operations of constructive or inventive genius on the common material of the external world.

CHAPTER I.

Of the Three Forms of Imagination.

1. WE have hitherto been exclusively occupied with those sources of pleasure which exist in the external creation, and which, in any faithful copy of it, must to a certain extent exist also.

These sources of beauty, however, are not presented by any very great work of art in a form of pure transcript. They invariably receive the reflection of the mind under whose influence * they have passed, and are modified or coloured by its image.

This modification is the Work of Imagination.

* (In the old edition, 'shadow.' I change to 'influence,' because it is not the proper work of intellect to cast shadows on what it observes.)

As, in the course of our succeeding investigation, we shall be called upon constantly to compare sources of beauty existing in nature with the images of them received by the human mind, it is very necessary for us shortly to review the conditions and limits of the Imaginative faculty, and to ascertain by what tests we may distinguish its sane, healthy, and profitable operation, from that which is erratic, diseased, and dangerous.

It is neither desirable nor possible here to examine or illustrate in full the essence of this mighty faculty. Such an examination would require a review of the whole field of literature, and would alone demand a volume.* Our present task is not to explain or exhibit full portraiture of this function of the mind

* ('Many and many volumes,' I should have said. It had, altogether, more than a volume to itself, as it was,—scattered through the five of the old edition,—and was then not half analyzed.)

in all its relations, but only to obtain some certain tests by which we may determine whether it be very Imagination or not, and unmask all impersonations of it; and this chiefly with respect to art, for in literature the faculty takes a thousand forms, according to the matter it has to treat, and becomes like the princess of the Arabian tale, sword, eagle, or fire, according to the war it wages; sometimes piercing, sometimes soaring, sometimes illumining, retaining no image of itself, except its supernatural power; so that I shall content myself with tracing that particular form of it, and unveiling those imitations of it only, which are to be found, or feared, in painting, referring to other creations of mind only for illustration.

2. Unfortunately, the works of metaphysicians will afford us in this most interesting inquiry no aid whatsoever. They who are constantly endeavouring to fathom and explain

the essence of the faculties of mind, are sure, in the end, to lose sight of all that cannot be explained, (though it may be defined and felt); and because, as I shall presently show, the essence of the Imaginative faculty is utterly mysterious and inexplicable, and to be recognized in its results only, or in the negative results of its absence, the metaphysicians, as far as I am acquainted with their works, miss it altogether, and never reach higher than a definition of Fancy by a false name.

What I understand by Fancy will presently appear: not that I contend for nomenclature, but only for distinction between two mental faculties, by whatever name they be called; one the source of all that is great in the poetic arts, the other merely decorative and entertaining; but which are often confounded together, and which have so much in common as to render strict definition of either difficult.

3. Dugald Stewart's meagre definition may

serve us for a starting point. "Imagination," he says, "includes conception or simple apprehension, which enables us to form a notion of those former objects of perception or of knowledge, out of which we are to make a selection; abstraction, which separates the selected materials from the qualities and circumstances which are connected with them in nature; and judgment or taste, which selects the materials and directs their combination. To these powers we may add that particular habit of association to which I formerly gave the name of Fancy, as it is this which presents to our choice all the different materials which are subservient to the efforts of imagination, and which may therefore be considered as forming the groundwork of poetical genius."

(By 'Fancy' in this passage, we find, on referring to the chapter treating of it, that nothing more is meant than the rapid occurrence of ideas of sense to the mind.)

Now, in this definition, the very point and purpose of all the inquiry is missed. We are told that judgment or taste "directs the combination." In order that anything may be directed, an end must be previously determined; what is the faculty that determines this end? and of what frame and make, how boned and fleshed, how conceived or seen, is the end itself? Bare judgment, or taste, cannot approve of what has no existence; and yet by Dugald Stewart's definition we are left to their catering among a host of conceptions, to produce a combination which, as they work for, they must see and approve before it exists. This power of prophecy is the very essence of the whole matter, and it is just that inexplicable part which the metaphysician misses.

4. As might be expected from his misunderstanding of the faculty, he has given an instance entirely nugatory.* It would be

* He continues thus: "To illustrate these observations

difficult to find in Milton a passage in which less power of imagination was shown, than the description of Eden, if, as I suppose, this be the passage meant, at the beginning of the fourth book, where I can find three expressions only in which this power is shown; the "*burnished* with golden rind, hung amiable," of

let us consider the steps by which Milton must have proceeded, in creating his imaginary garden of Eden. When he first proposed to himself that subject of description, it is reasonable to suppose that a variety of the most striking scenes which he had seen crowded into his mind. The association of ideas suggested them, and the power of conception placed each of them before him with all its beauties and imperfections. In every natural scene, if we destine it for any particular purpose, there are defects and redundancies, which art may sometimes, but cannot always correct. But the power of Imagination is unlimited. She can create and annihilate, and dispose at pleasure, her woods, her rocks, and her rivers. Milton, accordingly, would not copy his Eden from any one scene, but would select from each the features which were most eminently beautiful. The power of abstraction enabled him to make the separation, and taste directed him in the selection."

the Hesperian fruit, the "*lays forth* her purple grape" of the vine, and "the *fringed* bank with myrtle crowned" of the lake:* and these are not what Stewart meant, but only that

* (I ought at once to have explained here what I meant myself, by imagination; and how these three words gave evidence of it. I meant, and always do mean by it, primarily, the power of seeing anything we describe as if it were real; so that, looking at it as we describe (or paint), points may strike us which will give a vividness to the description that would not have occurred to vague memory, or been easily borrowed from the expressions of other writers. Any ordinary author might have spoken of oranges as golden, of grapes as purple, or of a bank as crowned with myrtle; but the conception is much more distinct and forcible which catches the lustre on the luminous rind, feels the weight of cluster in bending the festooned branches to the ground, or sees, in the distance, the delicate branches becoming a fringe at the lake's border. On the contrary, the mere collection of the most agreeable features from various scenes is in the power of ordinary industry, and is rather the folly of vulgar minds than the strength of distinguished ones. No intelligent traveller would ask a landscape painter to gather for him into one canvas the cascade of Terni, the lake of Nemi, and the promontory of Sestri.)

accumulation of bowers, groves, lawns, and hillocks, which is not imagination at all, but composition, and that of the commonest kind. Hence, if we take any passage in which there is real imagination, we shall find Stewart's hypothesis not only inefficient and obscure, but utterly inapplicable.

5. Take one or two at random.

> "On the other side
> Incensed with indignation, Satan stood
> Unterrified, and like a comet burned,
> That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge
> In the arctic sky, and from his horrid hair
> Shakes pestilence and war."

(Note that the word incensed is to be taken in its literal and material sense, set on fire.) What taste or judgment was it that directed this combination? or is there nothing more than taste or judgment here?

> "Ten paces huge
> He back recoiled; the tenth on bended knee

His massy spear upstaid ; as if on earth
Winds under ground, or waters forcing way,
Sidelong had pushed a mountain from his seat,
Half-sunk with all his pines."

"Together both, ere the high lawns appeared
Under the opening eyelids of the morn,
We drove afield, and both together heard
What time the gray-fly winds her *sultry* horn."

" Missing thee, I walk unseen
On the dry smooth-shaven green,
To behold the wandering moon,
Riding near her highest noon,
Like one that had been led astray
Through the heaven's wide pathless way ;
And oft, *as if her head she bowed,*
Stooping through a fleecy cloud."

It is evident that Stewart's explanation utterly fails in all these instances; for there is in them no " combination " whatsoever, but a particular mode of regarding the qualities or appearances of a single thing, illustrated and conveyed to us by the image of another; and the act of imagination, observe, is not the

selection of this image, but the mode of regarding the object.

But the metaphysician's definition fails yet more utterly, when we look at the imagination neither as regarding, nor combining, but as penetrating.

> "My gracious silence, hail!
> Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home,
> That weep'st to see me triumph? Ah, my dear,
> Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
> And mothers that lack sons."

How did Shakespeare *know* that Virgilia could not speak?

This knowledge, this intuitive and penetrative perception, is still one of the forms, the highest, of imagination, but there is no combination of images here.

6. We find, then, that the Imagination has three totally distinct functions. It combines, and by combination creates new forms; but the secret principle of this combination has not

been shown by the analysts. Again, it treats, or regards, both the simple images and its own combinations in peculiar ways; and, thirdly, it penetrates, analyzes, and reaches truths by no other faculty discoverable. These its three functions, I shall endeavour to illustrate, but not in this order: the most logical mode of treatment would be to follow the order in which commonly the mind works; that is, penetrating first, combining next, and treating or regarding finally; but this arrangement would be inconvenient, because the acts of penetration and of regard are so closely connected, and so like in their relations to other mental acts, that I wish to examine them consecutively; and the rather, because they have to do with higher subject matter than the mere act of combination, whose distinctive nature, that property which makes it imagination and not composition, it will, I think, be best to explain at setting out, as we

easily may, in subjects familiar and material. I shall therefore examine the Imaginative faculty in these three forms: first, as Combining or Associative; secondly, as Analytic or Penetrative; thirdly, as Regardant or Contemplative.

CHAPTER II.

Of Imagination Associative.

1. IN order to render our inquiry as easy as possible, we shall consider the dealing of the Associative imagination with the simplest possible matter,—that is, with conceptions of material things. First, therefore, we must define the nature of these conceptions themselves.

After beholding and examining any material object, our knowledge respecting it exists in two different forms. Some facts exist in the brain in a verbal form, as known, but not conceived; as, for instance, that it was heavy or light, that it was eight inches and a quarter long, etc., of which length we cannot have accurate conception, but only such a conception

as might attach to a length of seven inches or nine; and which fact we may recollect without any conception of the object at all. Other facts respecting it exist in the brain in a visible form, not always visible, but visible at will, as its being of such a colour, or having such and such a complicated shape: as the form of a rose-bud for instance, which it would be difficult to express verbally, neither is it retained by the brain in a verbal form, but a visible one: that is, when we wish for knowledge of its form for immediate use, we summon up a vision or image of the thing; we do not remember it in words, as we remember the fact that it took so many days to blow, or that it was gathered at such and such a time.

The knowledge of things retained in this visible form is called Conception by the metaphysicians, which term I shall retain; it is inaccurately called Imagination by Taylor, in the passage quoted by Wordsworth in the preece

to his poems; not but that the term Imagination is etymologically and rightly expressive of it, but we want that term for a higher faculty.

2. There are many questions respecting this faculty of conception of very great interest; such as the exact amount of aid that verbal knowledge renders to visible knowledge (as, for instance, the verbal knowledge that a flower has five, or seven, or ten petals, or that a muscle is inserted at such and such a point of the bone, aids the conception of the flower or the limb); and again, what amount of aid the visible knowledge renders to the verbal; as, for instance, whether any one, being asked a question about some animal or thing which instantly and from verbal knowledge he cannot answer, may have such power of summoning up the image of the animal or thing as to ascertain the fact by actual beholding; (which I do not assert, but can conceive to be possible); and again, what is that indefinite

and subtle character of the conception itself in most men, which admits not of being by themselves traced or realized, and yet is a sure test of likeness in any representation of the thing; like an intaglio, with a front light on it, whose lines cannot be seen, and yet they will fit one definite form only, and that accurately; these and many other questions it is irrelevant at present to determine, since to forward our present purpose, it will be well to suppose the conception aided by verbal knowledge to be absolutely perfect; and we will suppose a man to retain such clear image of a large number of the material things he has seen, as to be able to set down any of them on paper, with perfect fidelity and absolute memory* of their most minute features.

* On the distinction rightly made by the metaphysicians between conception absolute, and conception accompanied by reference to past time (or memory), it is of no use here to insist.

In thus setting them down on paper, he works, I suppose, exactly as he would work from nature, only copying the remembered image in his mind, instead of the real thing. He is, therefore, still nothing more than a copyist. There is no exercise of imagination in this whatsoever.

3. But over these images, vivid and distinct as nature herself, he has a command which over nature he has not. He can summon any that he chooses; and if, therefore, any group of them which he received from nature be not altogether to his mind, he is at liberty to remove some of the component images, and others foreign, and re-arrange the whole.

Let us suppose, for instance, that he has perfect knowledge of the forms of the Aiguilles Verte and Argentière, and of the great glacier between them at the upper extremity of the valley of Chamonix. The forms of the mountains please him, but the presence of the

glacier suits not his purpose. He removes the glacier, sets the mountains farther apart, and introduces between them part of the valley of the Rhone.

This is composition, and is what Dugald Stewart mistook for imagination, in the kingdom of which noble faculty it has no part nor lot.

4. The essential acts of Composition, properly so called, are the following. The mind which desires the new feature summons up before it those images which it supposes to be the kind wanted; of these it takes the one which it supposes to be fittest, and tries it; if it will not answer, it tries another, until it has obtained such an association as pleases it.

In this operation, if it be of little sensibility, it regards only the absolute beauty or value of the images brought before it; and takes that or those which it thinks fairest or most interesting, without any regard to their

sympathy with those for whose company they are destined. Of this kind is all vulgar composition; the "Mulino" of Claude, described in the preface to the First Part, being a characteristic example.

If the mind be of higher feeling, it will look to the sympathy or contrast of the features, to their likeness or dissimilarity: it will take, as it thinks best, features resembling or discordant; and if when it has put them together, it be not satisfied, it will repeat the process on the features themselves, cutting away one part and putting in another; so working more and more delicately down to the lowest details, until, by dint of experiment, of repeated trials and shiftings, and constant reference to principles (as that two lines must not mimic one another, that one mass must not be equal to another), etc., it has mortised together a satisfactory result.

5. This process will be more and more rapid

and effective, in proportion to the artist's powers of conception and association, these in their turn depending on his knowledge and experience.

The distinctness of his powers of conception will give value, point, and truth to every fragment that he draws from memory. His powers of association, and his knowledge of nature, will pour out before him, in greater or less number and appositeness, the images from which to choose. His experience guides him to quick discernment in the combination, when made, of the parts that are offensive and require change.

The most elevated power of mind of all these is that of association, by which images opposite or resemblant, or of whatever kind wanted, are called up quickly and in multitudes. When this power is very brilliant, it is called Fancy; not that this is the only meaning of the word Fancy; but it is the meaning of it in relation

to that function of the imagination which we are here considering; for fancy has three functions; one subordinate to each of the three functions of the imagination.

Great differences of power are manifested among artists in this respect; some having hosts of distinct images always at their command, and rapidly discerning resemblance or contrast; others having few images, and obscure, at their disposal, nor readily governing those they have.

Where the powers of fancy are very brilliant, the picture becomes highly interesting; if her images are systematically and rightly combined, and truthfully rendered, it will become even impressive and instructive; if wittily and curiously combined, it will be captivating and entertaining.

6. But all this time the imagination has not once shown itself. All this (except the gift of fancy) may be taught; all this is easily

comprehended and analyzed; but imagination is neither to be taught, nor by any efforts to be attained, nor by any acuteness of discernment dissected or analyzed.

It has been said that in composition the mind can only take cognizance of likeness or dissimilarity, or of abstract beauty among the ideas it brings together. But neither likeness nor dissimilarity secures harmony. We saw in the chapter on Unity that likeness destroyed harmony or unity of membership; and that difference did not necessarily secure it, but only that particular *imperfection* in each of the harmonizing parts which can only be supplied by its fellow part. If, therefore, the combination made is to be harmonious,* the artist must induce in each of its component parts (suppose

* (The use of this word ought to have shown me the narrowness, and, if generalized, the fallacy, of this theory of imperfection. Musicians, indeed, speak of the imperfection of chords, without certain notes required for their

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two only, for simplicity's sake), such imperfection as that the other shall put it right. If one of them be perfect by itself, the other will be an excrescence. Both must be faulty when separate, and each corrected by the presence of the other. If he can accomplish this, the result will be beautiful; it will be a whole, an organized body with dependent members;—he is an inventor. If not, let his separate features be as beautiful, as apposite, or as resemblant as they may, they form no whole. They are two members glued together. He is only a carpenter and joiner.

completion or resolution; but the separate notes in either melody or harmony are not themselves faultful or painful. The theory stated in the text applies in music only to the use of discords; and in painting applies but vaguely and doubtfully to anything. Two wrongs do, indeed, in pictures sometimes make a right: but it is much more likely they will make a third wrong; and the several parts of a beautiful composition may often be as lovely as the whole.)

7. Now, the conceivable imperfections of any single feature are infinite. It is impossible, therefore, to fix upon a form of imperfection in the one, and try with this all the forms of imperfection of the other until one fits; but the two imperfections must be co-relatively and simultaneously conceived.

This is Imagination properly so called; imagination associative, the grandest mechanical power that the human intelligence possesses, and one which will appear more and more marvellous the longer we consider it. By its operation, two ideas are chosen out of an infinite mass (for it evidently matters not whether the imperfections be conceived out of the infinite number conceivable, or selected out of a number recollected), two ideas which are *separately wrong*, which together shall be right, and of whose unity, therefore, the idea must be formed at the instant they are seized, as it is only in that unity that either is

good, and therefore only the *conception of that unity can prompt the preference.** Now, what is that prophetic action of mind, which out of an infinite mass of things that cannot be tried together, seizes, at the same instant, two that are fit for each other; together right, yet each disagreeable alone.

8. This operation of mind, so far as I can see, is absolutely inexplicable, but there is something like it in chemistry.

"The action of sulphuric acid on metallic zinc affords an instance of what was once called Disposing Affinity. Zinc decomposes pure water at common temperatures with extreme slowness; but as soon as sulphuric acid is added, decomposition of the water takes place rapidly,

* (This anticipatory preference or determination takes place whether the parts to be combined are beautiful or ugly. The following chemical illustration is not inapt, and the rest of the chapter, with some abatement of its hyperbole, true.)

though the acid merely unites with oxide of zinc. The former explanation was, that the affinity of the acid for oxide of zinc disposed the metal to unite with oxygen, and thus enabled it to decompose water; that is, the oxide of zinc was supposed to produce an effect previous to its existence. The obscurity of this explanation arises from regarding changes as consecutive, which are in reality simultaneous. There is no succession in the process, the oxide of zinc is not formed previously to its combination with the acid, but at the same instant. There is, as it were, but one chemical change, which consists in the combination, at one and the same moment, of zinc with oxygen, and of oxide of zinc with the acid; and this change occurs because these two affinities, acting together, overcome the attraction of oxygen and hydrogen for one another." *

* "Elements of Chemistry," by the late Edward Turner, M.D., part ii. sect. iv.

Now, if the imaginative artist will permit us, with all deference, to represent his combining intelligence under the figure of sulphuric acid; and if we suppose the fragment of zinc to be embarrassed among infinitely numerous fragments of diverse metals, and the oxygen dispersed and mingled among gases countless and indistinguishable; we shall have an excellent type, in material things, of the action of the imagination on the immaterial. Both actions are, I think, inexplicable; for, however simultaneous the chemical changes may be, yet the causing power is the affinity of the acid for what has no existence. It is neither to be explained how that affinity operates on atoms uncombined, nor how the artist's desire for an unconceived whole prompts him to the selection of necessary divisions.

9. This operation would be wonderful enough, if it were concerned with two ideas only. But a powerfully imaginative mind seizes and

combines at the same instant, not only two, but all the important ideas of its poem or picture; and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other; as the motion of a snake's body goes through all parts at once, and its volition acts at the same instant in coils that go contrary ways.

This faculty is indeed something that looks as if man were made after the image of God. It is inconceivable, admirable, altogether divine; and yet, wonderful as it may seem, it is palpably evident that no less an operation is necessary for the production of any great work; for, by the definition of Unity of Membership (the essential characteristic of greatness), not only certain couples or groups of parts, but *all* the parts of a noble work must be separately imperfect; each must imply, and ask for all the rest, and the glory of every one of them

must consist in its relation to the rest; neither while so much as one is wanting can any be right. And it is evidently impossible to conceive, in each separate feature, a certain want or wrongness which can only be corrected by the other features of the picture (not by one or two merely, but by all,) unless, together with the want, we conceive also of what is wanted, that is, of all the rest of the work or picture. Hence Fuseli:—

"Second thoughts are admissible in painting and poetry only as dressers of the first conception; no great idea was ever formed in fragments."

"He alone can conceive and compose, who sees the whole at once before him."

10. There is, however, a limit to the power of all human imagination. When the relations to be observed are *absolutely* necessary, and highly complicated, the mind cannot grasp them; and the result is a total deprivation of

all power of imagination associative in such matter. For this reason, no human mind has ever conceived a new animal.* For as it is evident that in an animal, every part implies all the rest; that is, the form of the eye involves the form of the brow and nose, these the form of the forehead and lip, these of the head and chin, and so on, so that it is physically impossible to conceive of any one of these members, unless we conceive the relation it bears to the whole animal; and as this relation is necessary, certain, and complicated, allowing of no licence or inaccuracy, the intellect utterly fails under the load, and is reduced to mere composition; putting the bird's wing on men's shoulders, or half the human body to half the horse's, in doing which there is no action of

* (Too bold a negative; yet it is true that imagined animals are nearly always feebler or less interesting than real ones. In the voyage of Violet, Guy, and Lionel, the Quangle-wangle always hides its head.)

imagination, but only of fancy; though in the treatment and contemplation of the compound form there may be much imagination, as we shall presently see.

11. The matter, therefore, in which associative imagination can be shown is that which admits of great licence and variety of arrangement, and in which a certain amount of relation only is required; as especially in the elements of landscape painting, in which best it may be illustrated.

When an unimaginative painter is about to draw a tree, (and we will suppose him, for better illustration of the point in question, to have good feeling and correct knowledge of the nature of trees,) he probably lays on his paper such a general form as he knows to be characteristic of the tree to be drawn, and such as he believes will fall in agreeably with the other masses of his picture, which we will suppose partly prepared. When this form is set

down, he assuredly finds it has done something he did not intend it to do. It has mimicked some prominent line, or overpowered some necessary mass. He begins pruning and changing, and, after several experiments, succeeds in obtaining a form which does no material mischief to any other. To this form he proceeds to attach a trunk, and, working probably on a received notion or rule (for the unimaginative painter never works without a principle) that tree trunks ought to lean first one way and then the other as they go up, and ought not to stand under the middle of the tree, he sketches a serpentine form of requisite propriety; when it has gone up far enough, that is, till it looks disagreeably long, he will begin to ramify it; and if there be another tree in the picture with two large branches, he knows that this, by all laws of composition, ought to have three or four, or some different number; and because he knows that if three or four branches start

from the same point they will look formal, therefore he makes them start from points one above another; and because equal distances are improper, therefore they shall start at unequal distances. When they are fairly started, he knows they must undulate or go backwards and forwards, which accordingly he makes them do at random; and because he knows that all forms ought to be contrasted, he makes one bend down while the other three go up. The three that go up he knows must not go up without interfering with each other, and so he makes two of them cross. He thinks it also proper that there should be variety of character in them; so he makes the one that bends down graceful and flexible, and, of the two that cross, he splinters one and makes a stump of it. He repeats the process among the more complicated minor boughs, until coming to the smallest, he thinks farther care unnecessary, but draws them freely, and by chance. Having to

put on the foliage, he will make it flow properly in the direction of the tree's growth; he will make all the extremities graceful; but will be tormented by finding them come all alike, and at last will be obliged to spoil a number of them altogether, in order to obtain opposition. They will not, however, be united in this their spoliation, but will remain uncomfortably separate and individually ill-tempered. He consoles himself by the reflection that it is unnatural for all of them to be equally perfect.

12. Now I suppose that through the whole of this process he has been able to refer to his definite memory or conception of nature for every one of the fragments he has successively added; that the details, colour, fractures, insertions, etc., of his boughs, are all either actual recollections or based on secure knowledge of the tree (and herein I allow far more than is commonly the case with unimaginative

painters). But, as far as the process of combination is concerned, it is evident that, from beginning to end, his laws have been his safety, and his plague has been his liberty. He has been compelled to work at random or under the guidance of feeling only, whenever there was anything left to his own decision. He has never been decided in anything except in what he *must* or *must not* do. He has walked as a drunken man on a broad road; his guides are the hedges; and, between these limits, the broader the way, the more difficult his progress.

13. The advance of the imaginative artist is precisely the reverse of this. He owns no laws. He defies all restraint, and cuts down all hedges. There is nothing within the limits of natural possibility that he dares not do, or that he allows the necessity of doing. The laws of nature he knows; these are to him no restraint. They are his own nature. All other

laws or limits he sets at utter defiance; his journey is over an untrodden and pathless plain. But he sees his end over the waste from the first, and goes straight at it; never losing sight of it, nor throwing away a step. Nothing can stop him, nothing turn him aside; falcons and lynxes are of slow and uncertain sight compared with his. He saw his tree, trunk, boughs, foliage and all, from the first moment; not only the tree, but the sky behind it; not only that tree or sky, but all the other great features of his picture; by what intense power of instantaneous selection and amalgamation cannot be explained, but by this it may be proved and tested; that, if we examine the tree of the unimaginative painter, we shall find that on removing any part or parts of it, though the rest will indeed suffer, as being deprived of the proper development of a tree, and as involving a blank space that wants occupation, yet the portions left are not

made discordant or disagreeable. They are absolutely and in themselves as valuable as they can be; every stem is a perfect stem, and every twig a graceful twig, or at least as perfect and as graceful as they were before the removal of the rest. But if we try the same experiment on the imaginative painter's work, and break off the merest stem or twig of it, it all goes to pieces like a Prince Rupert's drop. There is not so much as a seed of it but it lies on the tree's life, like the grain upon the tongue of Chaucer's sainted child. Take it away, and the boughs will sing to us no longer. All is dead and cold.

14. This, then, is the first sign of the presence of real imagination as opposed to composition. But here is another not less important.

We have seen that as each part is selected and fitted by the unimaginative painter, he renders it, in itself, as beautiful as he is able.

If it be ugly it remains so; he is incapable of correcting it by the *addition of another ugliness*,* and therefore he chooses all his features as fair as they may be (at least if his object be beauty). But a small proportion only of the ideas he has at his disposal will reach his standard of absolute beauty. The others will be of no use to him: and among those which he permits himself to use, there will be so marked a family likeness that he will be more and more cramped, as his picture advances, for want of material, and tormented by multiplying resemblances, unless disguised by some artifice of light and shade or other forced difference: and with all the differences he can imagine, his tree will yet show a sameness and sickening repetition in all its parts, and all his trees will be like one another, except so far as

* (I had better have said 'picturesqueness' or 'individuality,' than 'ugliness'; yet the gist of this part of the chapter is true.)

one leans east and another west, one is broadest at the top and another at the bottom; while through all this insipid repetition, the means by which he forces contrast, dark boughs opposed to light, rugged to smooth, etc., will be painfully evident, to the utter destruction of all dignity and repose.

15. The imaginative work is necessarily the absolute opposite of all this. As all its parts are imperfect, and as there is an unlimited supply of imperfection (for the ways in which things may be wrong are infinite), the imagination is never at a loss, nor ever likely to repeat itself; nothing comes amiss to it; but whatever rude matter it receives, it instantly so arranges that it comes right; all things fall into their place, and appear in that place perfect, useful, and evidently not to be spared; so that of its combinations there is endless variety, and every intractable and seemingly unavailable fragment that we give to it, is

instantly turned to some brilliant use, and made the nucleus of a new group of glory; however poor or common the gift, it will be thankful for it, treasure it up, and pay in gold; and it has that life in it, and fire, that wherever it passes, among the dead bones and dust of things, behold! a shaking, and the bones come together, bone to his bone.

16. And now we find what noble sympathy and unity there are between the Imaginative and Theoretic faculties. Both agree in this, that they reject nothing, and are thankful for all; but the Theoretic faculty takes out of everything that which is beautiful, while the Imaginative faculty takes hold of the very imperfections which the Theoretic rejects; and, by means of these angles and roughnesses, it joints and bolts the separate stones into a mighty temple, wherein the Theoretic faculty, in its turn, does deepest homage. Thus sympathetic in their desires, harmoniously diverse

in their operation, each working for the other with what the other needs not, all things external to man are by one or other turned to good.

17. Now we have hitherto, for the sake of clearness, opposed the total absence of imagination to the perfect presence of it, in order to make the difference between composition and imagination thoroughly understood. But if we are to give examples of either the want or the presence of the Power, it is necessary to note the circumstances by which both are modified. In the first place, few artists of any standing are totally devoid of this faculty: some small measure of it most of them possess, though of all the forms of intellect, this, and its sister, penetrative imagination, are the rarest and most precious; but few painters have reached eminence without some leaven of it; whether it can be increased by practice I doubt. On the other hand, fewer still are

possessed of it in very high degree; and even with the men of most gigantic power in this respect, of whom, I think, Tintoret stands far the head, there are evident limits to its exercise, and portions to be found in their works that have not been included in the original grasp of them, but have been suggested and incorporated during their progress, or added in decoration; and, with the great mass of painters, there are frequent flaws and failures in the conception, so that, when they intend to produce a perfect work, they throw their thought into different experimental forms, and decorate it and discipline it long before realizing it, so that there is a certain amount of mere composition in the most imaginative works; and a grain or two of imagination commonly in the most artificial. And again, whatever portions of a picture are taken honestly and without alteration from nature, have, so far as they go, the look of imagination, because all that

nature does is imaginative,* that is, perfect as a whole, and made up of imperfect features; so that the painter of the meanest imaginative power may yet do grand things, if he will keep to strict portraiture; and it would be well if all artists were to endeavour to do so, for if they have imagination, it will force its way in spite of them, and show itself in their every stroke; and if not, they will not get it by leaving nature, but only sink into nothingness.

18. Keeping these points in view, it is interesting to observe the different degrees and relations of the imagination, as accompanied with more or less feeling or desire of harmony, vigour of conception, or constancy of reference to truth. Of men of name perhaps Claude is

* (Nonsense, again. Imagination is the name of a human faculty, not of inanimate power: if we compare them on equal terms, there is p'enty of natural scenery which is stupid and ugly, just as there are plenty of pictures that are so. See the note farther on at page 55.)

the best instance of a want of imagination, nearly total, borne out by painful but untaught study of nature, and much feeling for abstract beauty of form, with none whatever for harmony of expression. In Gaspar Poussin, we have the same want of imagination disguised by more masculine qualities of mind, and grander reachings after sympathy. Thus, in the sacrifice of Isaac, in our own gallery, the spirit of the composition is solemn and unbroken; it would have been a grand picture if the forms of the mass of foliage on the right, and of the clouds in the centre, had not been hopelessly unimaginative. The stormy wind of the picture of Dido and Æneas blows loudly through its leaves; but the total want of invention in the cloud forms bears it down beyond redemption. The foreground tree of the La Riccia is another characteristic instance of absolute nullity of imagination.

19. In Salvator, the imagination is vigorous,

the composition dexterous and clever, as in the St. Jerome of the Brera Gallery, the Diogenes of the Pitti, and the pictures of the Guadagni Palace; while all are rendered valueless by coarseness of feeling and habitual non-reference to nature.

All the landscape of Nicolo Poussin is imaginative, but the development of the power in Tintoret and Titian is so unapproachably intense that the mind unwillingly rests elsewhere. The four landscapes which occur to me as the most magnificently characteristic are: first, the Flight into Egypt, of the Scuola di San Rocco (Tintoret); secondly, the Titian of the Camuccini collection at Rome, with the figures by John Bellini; thirdly, Titian's St. Jerome, in the Brera Gallery at Milan; and fourthly, the S. Pietro Martire, which I name last in spite of its importance, because there is something unmeaning and unworthy of Titian about the undulation of the trunks, and the

upper part of it is destroyed by the intrusion of some dramatic clouds of that species which I have enough described in our former examination of the Central Cloud Region,—vol. i. It is not of the least consequence, or I would quote it.

I do not mean to set these four works above the rest of the landscape of these masters; I name them only because the landscape is in them prominent and characteristic. It would be well to compare with them the other backgrounds of Tintoret in the Scuola, especially that of the Temptation and the Agony in the Garden, and the landscape of the two large pictures in the Church of La Madonna dell' Orto.

20. But for immediate and close illustration it is perhaps best to refer to a work more accessible, the Cephalus and Procris of Turner in the Liber Studiorum. I know of no landscape more purely or magnificently imaginative, or

bearing more distinct evidence of the relative and simultaneous conception of the parts. Let the reader first cover with his hand the two trunks that rise against the sky on the right, and ask himself how any termination of the central mass so *ugly* as the straight trunk which he will then painfully see, could have been conceived or admitted without *simultaneous conception* of the trunks he has taken away on the right? Let him again conceal the whole central mass, and leave these two only, and again ask himself whether anything so ugly as that bare trunk in the shape of a Y, could have been admitted without reference to the central mass? Then let him remove from this trunk its two arms, and try the effect; let him again remove the single trunk on the extreme right; then let him try the third trunk without the excrescence at the bottom of it; finally, let him conceal the fourth trunk from the right, with the

slender boughs at the top: he will find, in each case, that he has destroyed a feature on which everything else depends; and if proof be required of the vital power of still smaller features, let him remove the sunbeam that comes through beneath the faint mass of trees on the hill in the distance.*

It is useless to enter into farther particulars; the reader may be left to his own close examination of this and of the other works of Turner, in which he will always find the associative imagination developed in the most profuse and marvellous modes; especially in the drawing of foliage and skies, in both of which the presence or absence of the associative power may best be tested in all artists. I have, however, confined my present illustrations chiefly to foliage, because other operations of

* This ray of light, however, has an imaginative power of another kind, presently to be spoken of. Compare Chap. IV. § 18.

the imagination, besides the associative, interfere extensively in the treatment of sky.

21. There remains but one question to be determined relating to this faculty; what operation, namely, supposing it possessed in high degree, it has or ought to have in the artist's treatment of natural scenery?

I have just said that nature is always imaginative,* but it does not follow that her imagination is always of high subject, or that the imagination of all the parts is of a like and sympathetic kind; the boughs of every bramble bush are imaginatively arranged, so are those of every oak and cedar; but it does not follow that there is imaginative sympathy between bramble and cedar. There are few natural scenes whose harmonies are not conceivably

* (What I meant by this twice repeated bit of nonsense, was a fact of some interest, had it been better explained,—namely, that almost any honest study of natural grouping will look intellectually, if not always agreeably, composed, provided it be honest throughout.)

improvable either by banishment of some discordant point, or by addition of some sympathetic one; it constantly happens that there is a profuseness too great to be comprehended, or an inequality in the pitch, meaning, and intensity of different parts. The imagination will banish all that is extraneous; it will seize out of the many threads of different feeling which nature has suffered to become entangled, one only; and where that seems thin and likely to break, it will spin it stouter, and in doing this, it never knots, but weaves in the new thread; so that all its work looks as pure and true as nature itself, and cannot be guessed from it but by its exceeding simplicity, (*known* from it, it cannot be); so that herein we find another test of the imaginative work, that it looks always as if it had been gathered straight from nature, whereas the unimaginative shows its joints and knots, and is visibly composition.

22. And here, then, we arrive at an important conclusion (though one somewhat contrary to the positions commonly held on the subject), namely, that if anything looks unnatural, there can be no imagination in it (at least not associative). We frequently hear works that have no truth in them justified or elevated on the score of being imaginative. Let it be understood, once for all, that imagination never deigns to touch anything but truth; and though it does not follow that where there is the appearance of truth, there has been imaginative operation, of this we may be assured, that where there is appearance of falsehood, the imagination has had no hand.*

For instance, the landscape above mentioned of Titian's St. Jerome may, for aught I known, be a pure transcript of a rocky slope covered

* (Untrue again; in the sweeping negation; right only in the general connection of wisely inventive with closely observant faculty.)

with chestnuts among his native mountains. It has all the look of a sketch from nature ; if it be not, the imagination developed in it is of the highest order ; if it be, the imagination has only acted in the suggestion of the dark sky, of the shape of the flakes of solemn cloud, and of the gleam of russet light along the distant ground.*

Again, it is impossible to tell whether the two nearest trunks of the Æsacus and Hesperie of the Liber Studiorum, especially the large one on the right with the ivy, have been invented, or taken straight from nature ; they have all the look of accurate portraiture. I

* It is said at Venice that Titian took the trees of the S. Pietro Martire out of his garden opposite Murano. I think this unlikely ; there is something about the lower trunks that has a taint of composition : the thought of the whole, however, is thoroughly fine. The backgrounds of the frescoes at Padua are also very characteristic, and the well-known woodcut of St. Francis receiving the stigmata one of the mightiest of existing landscape thoughts ; and yet it is pure portraiture of pine and Spanish chestnut.

can hardly imagine anything so perfect to have been obtained except from the real thing; but we know that the imagination must have begun to operate somewhere, we cannot tell where, since the multitudinous harmonies of the rest of the picture could hardly in any real scene have continued so inviolately sweet.

The final tests, therefore, of the work of associative imagination are, its intense simplicity, its perfect harmony, and its absolute truth. It may be a harmony, majestic or humble, abrupt or prolonged, but it is always a governed and perfect whole; evidencing in all its relations the weight, prevalence, and universal dominion of an awful, inexplicable Power; a chastening, animating, and disposing Mind.

CHAPTER III.

Of Imagination Penetrative.

1. THUS far we have been defining that combining operation of the Imagination, which appears to be in a sort mechanical, yet takes place in the same inexplicable modes, whatever be the order of conception submitted to it, though I choose to illustrate it by its dealings with mere matter before taking cognizance of any nobler subjects of imagery. We must now examine the dealing of the Imagination with its separate conceptions, and endeavour to understand, not only its principles of selection, but its modes of apprehension with respect to what it selects.

2. When Milton's Satan first "rears from off the pool his mighty stature," the image

of leviathan before suggested not being yet abandoned, the effect on the fire-wave is described as of the upheaved monster on the ocean stream:

> "On each hand the flames,
> Driven backward, slope their pointed spires, and, rolled
> In billows, leave i' the midst a horrid vale."

And then follows a fiercely restless piece of volcanic imagery:

> "As when the force
> Of subterranean wind transports a hill
> Torn from Pelorus, or the shattered side
> Of thundering Ætna, whose combustible
> And fuelled entrails thence conceiving fire,
> Sublimed with mineral fury, aid the winds,
> And leave a singëd bottom all involved
> With stench and smoke: such resting found the sole
> Of unblest feet."

Yet I think all this is too far detailed, and deals too much with externals: we feel rather the form of the fire-waves than their fury; we walk upon them too securely; and the fuel, sublimation, smoke, and singeing seem

to me images only of partial combustion; they vary and extend the conception, but they lower the thermometer. Look back, if you will, and add to the description the glimmering of the livid flames; the sulphurous hail and red lightning; yet all together, however they overwhelm us with horror, fail of making us thoroughly, unendurably *hot*. The essence of intense flame has not been given. Now hear Dante:

> "Feriami 'l Sole in su i' omero destro,
> Che già raggiando tutto 'l Occidente
> *Mutava in bianco aspetto di cilestro.*
> Ed io facea *con 'l ombra più rovente*
> *Parer la fiamma.*"

That is a slight touch; he has not gone to Ætna or Pelorus for fuel; but we shall not soon recover from it, he has taken our breath away and leaves us gasping. No smoke nor cinders there. Pure white, hurtling, formless flame; very fire-crystal, we cannot make spires nor waves of it, nor divide it, nor walk on it; there

is no question about singeing soles of feet. It is lambent annihilation.

3. Such is always the mode in which the highest imaginative faculty seizes its materials. It never stops at crusts or ashes, or outward images of any kind; it ploughs them all aside, and plunges into the very central fiery heart; nothing else will content its spirituality; whatever semblances and various outward shows and phases its subject may possess * go for nothing; it gets within all fence, cuts down to the root, and drinks the very vital sap of that it deals with: once therein, it is at liberty to throw up what new shoots it will, so always that the true juice and sap be in them; and to prune and twist them at its pleasure, and bring them to fairer fruit than grew on the old tree: but all this pruning and twisting is work that it likes not, and often does ill; its function and gift are the getting at the

* (Another exemplary course of hissing.)

root, its nature and dignity depend on its holding things always by the heart. Take its hand from off the beating of that, and it will prophesy no longer; it looks not in the eyes, it judges not by the voice, it describes not by outward features; all that it affirms, judges, or describes, it affirms from within.*

4. It may seem to the reader that I am incorrect in calling this penetrating, possession-taking faculty imagination. Be it so; the name is of little consequence; the faculty itself, called by what name we will, I insist upon as the highest intellectual power of man. There is no reasoning in it; it works not by algebra, nor by integral calculus; it is a piercing, pholas-like, mind's tongue, that works and tastes into the very rock heart; no matter what be the subject submitted to it, substance

* The reader will find in the 86th paper of the *Guardian* some interesting passages confirmatory of the view above given of the Imagination.

or spirit; all is alike divided asunder, joint and marrow, whatever utmost truth, life, principle it has, laid bare; and that which has no truth, life, nor principle, dissipated into its original smoke at a touch. The whispers at men's ears it lifts into visible angels. Vials that have lain sealed in the deep sea a thousand years it unseals, and brings out of them Genii.

Every great conception of poet or painter is held and treated by this faculty. Every character that is so much as touched by men like Æschylus, Homer, Dante, or Shakspeare, is by them held by the heart; and every circumstance or sentence of their being, speaking, or seeming, is seized by process from within, and is referred to that inner secret spring of which the hold is never lost for an instant; so that every sentence, as it has been thought out from the heart, opens for us a way down to the heart, leads us to the centre, and then

leaves us to gather what more we may. It is the Open Sesame of a huge, obscure, endless cave, with inexhaustible treasure of pure gold scattered in it; the wandering about and gathering the pieces may be left to any of us, all can accomplish that; but the first opening of that invisible door in the rock is of the imagination only.

5. Hence there is in every word set down by the imaginative mind an awful under-current of meaning, and evidence and shadow upon it of the deep places out of which it has come. It is often obscure, often half told; for he who wrote it, in his clear seeing of the things beneath, may have been impatient of detailed interpretation; but if we choose to dwell upon it and trace it, it will lead us always securely back to that metropolis of the soul's dominion from which we may follow out all the ways and tracks to its farthest coasts.

I think the "Quel giorno più non vi

leggemmo avante" of Francesca di Rimini, and the "He has no children" of Macduff are as fine instances as can be given; but the sign and mark of it are visible on every line of the four great men above instanced.

6. The unimaginative writer, on the other hand, as he has never pierced to the heart, so he can never touch it. If he has to paint a passion, he remembers the external signs of it, he collects expressions of it from other writers, he searches for similes, he composes, exaggerates, heaps term on term, figure on figure, till we groan beneath the cold disjointed heap: but it is all faggot and no fire; the life breath is not in it; his passion has the form of the leviathan, but it never makes the deep boil; he fastens us all at anchor in the scaly rind of it; our sympathies remain as idle as a painted ship upon a painted ocean.

And that virtue of originality that men so strain after is not *newness*, as they vainly think

(there is nothing new), it is only *genuineness ;* * it all depends on this single glorious faculty of getting to the spring of things and working out from that; it is the coolness, and clearness, and deliciousness of the water fresh from the fountain head, opposed to the thick, hot, unrefreshing drainage from other men's meadows.

7. This freshness, however, is not to be taken for an infallible sign of imagination, inasmuch as it results also from a vivid operation of fancy, whose parallel function to this division of the imaginative faculty it is here necessary to distinguish.

* (Some sense in this bit at last! The six pages of metaphor which we have just got through mean, in all, little more than that the best authors express the mind, more than the person or manners, of men or heroes. I often wish, now, they were a little more communicative. It is pleasant to know that Pallas had blue eyes; but I think Homer might have also told us something about her lips and chin.)

I believe it will be found that the entirely unimaginative mind *sees* nothing of the object it has to dwell upon or describe, and is therefore utterly unable, as it is blind itself, to set anything before the eyes of the reader.*

The fancy sees the outside, and is able to give a portrait of the outside, clear, brilliant, and full of detail.†

The imagination sees the heart, and inner nature, and makes them felt, but is often obscure, mysterious, and interrupted, in its giving of outer detail.

Take an instance. A writer with neither imagination nor fancy, describing a fair lip, does not see it, but thinks about it, and about what is said of it, and calls it well turned, or rosy, or delicate, or lovely, or afflicts us with

* Compare Arist. Rhet. iii. 11.

† For the distinction between fancy and simple conception, see the following chapter, § 3.

some other quenching and chilling epithet. Now hear Fancy speak:

> "Her lips were red, and one was thin,
> Compared with that was next her chin,
> Some bee had stung it newly." *

The real, red, bright being of the lip is there in a moment. But it is all outside; no expression yet, no mind. Let us go a step farther with Warner, of Fair Rosamond struck by Eleanor:

* I take this and the next instance from Leigh Hunt's admirable piece of criticism, "Imagination and Fancy," which ought to be read with care, and to which, though somewhat loosely arranged, I may refer for all the filling up and illustration that the subject requires. With respect to what has just been said respecting want of imagination, compare his criticism of Addison's Cato, p. 28. I cannot, however, confirm his judgment, nor admit his selection of instances, among painters; he has looked to their manner only and habitual choice of subject, without feeling their power; and has given work to the coarseness, mindlessness, and eclecticism of Guido and the Caracci, which, in its poetical demand of tenderness, might have foiled Pinturicchio, of dignity, Leonardo, and of colour, Giorgione.

"With that she dashed her on the lips
So dyëd double red;
Hard was the heart that gave the blow,
Soft were those lips that bled."

The tenderness of mind begins to mingle with the outside colour, the Imagination is seen in its awakening. Next Shelley:

"Lamp of life, thy lips are burning
Through the veil that seems to hide them,
As the radiant lines of morning
Through thin clouds ere they divide them."

There dawns the entire soul in that morning; yet we may stop if we choose at the image still external, at the crimson clouds. The imagination is contemplative rather than penetrative. Last, hear Hamlet:

"Here hung those lips that I have kissed, I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now, your gambols, your songs, your flashes of merriment that were wont to set the table on a roar!"

There is the essence of lip, and the full power of the imagination.

Again, compare Milton's flowers in Lycidas

with Perdita's. In Milton it happens, I think, generally, and in the case before us most certainly, that the imagination is mixed and broken with fancy, and so the strength of the imagery is part of iron and part of clay;

"Bring the rathe primrose, that forsaken dies, *Imagination.*
The tufted crow-toe and pale jessamine, *Nugatory.*
The white pink, and the pansy freaked with jet, *Fancy.*
The glowing violet, *Imagination.*
The musk rose, and the well-attired woodbine, *Fancy,* [vulgar.
With cowslips wan that hang the pensive head, *Imagination.*
And every flower that sad embroidery wears." *Mixed.*

Then hear Perdita:

"O Proserpina,
For the flowers now, that, frighted, thou let'st fall
From Dis's waggon! daffodils,
That come before the swallow dares, and take
The winds of March with beauty; violets, dim,
But sweeter than the lids of Juno's eyes,
Or Cytherea's breath; pale primroses,
That die unmarried, ere they can behold
Bright Phœbus in his strength, a malady
Most incident to maids."

Observe how the imagination in these last lines goes into the very inmost soul of every flower, after having touched them all at first with that heavenly timidness, the shadow of Proserpine's, and gilded them with celestial gathering, and never stops on their spots, or their bodily shape; while Milton sticks in the stains upon them, and puts us off with that unhappy freak of jet in the very flower that, without this bit of paper-staining, would have been the most precious to us of all. "There is pansies, that's for thoughts."

8. So, I believe, it will be found throughout the operation of the fancy, that it has to do with the outsides of things,* and is content therewith; of this there can be no doubt in such passages as that description of Mab so often given as an illustration of it, and many

* (As I said before, if anybody likes to call the fancy of outsides, one faculty, and of insides, another, he may do as he pleases. But he needn't unless he please.)

other instances will be found in Leigh Hunt's work already referred to. Only some embarrassment is caused by passages in which Fancy is seizing the outward signs of emotion, understanding them as such, and yet, in pursuance of her proper function, taking for her share, and for that which she chooses to dwell upon, the outside sign rather than the emotion. Note in Macbeth that brilliant instance:

> "Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky,
> And fan our people cold."

The outward shiver and coldness of fear is seized on, and irregularly but admirably attributed by the fancy to the drift of the banners. Compare Solomon's Song, where the imagination stays not at the outside, but dwells on the fearful emotion itself:

> "Who is she that looketh forth as the morning; fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners?"

9. Now, if these be the prevailing character-

istics of the two faculties, it is evident that certain other collateral differences will result from them. Fancy, as she stays at the externals, can never feel. She is one of the hardest-hearted of the intellectual faculties, or rather one of the most purely and simply intellectual. She cannot be made serious,* no edge-tools but she will play with. Whereas the Imagination is in all things the reverse. She cannot be but serious; she sees too far, too darkly, too solemnly, too earnestly, ever to smile. There is something in the heart of everything, if we can reach it, that we shall not be inclined to laugh at. And thus there is reciprocal action between the intensity of moral feeling and the power of imagination; for, on the one hand, those who have keenest sympathy are those who look closest and

* Fancy, in her third function, may, however, become serious, and gradually rise into imagination in doing so. Compare Chap. IV. § 5.

pierce deepest, and hold securest; and, on the other, those who have so pierced and seen the melancholy deeps of things, are filled with the most intense passion and gentleness of sympathy. Hence, I suppose that the powers of the imagination may always be tested by accompanying tenderness of emotion; and thus, as Byron said, there is no tenderness like Dante's, neither any intensity nor seriousness like his, such seriousness that it is incapable of perceiving that which is commonplace or ridiculous, but fuses all down into its own whitehot fire.

10. And, on the other hand, I suppose the chief bar to the action of imagination, and stop to all greatness in this present age of ours, is its mean and shallow love of jest; so that if there be in any good and lofty work a flaw, failing, or undipped vulnerable part, where sarcasm may stick or stay, it is caught at, and pointed at, and buzzed about, and fixed upon, and

stung into, as a recent wound is by flies; and nothing is ever taken seriously or as it was meant, but always, if it may be, turned the wrong way, and misunderstood: and while this is so, there is not, nor cannot be, any hope of achievement of high things; men dare not open their hearts to us, if we are to broil them on a thorn-fire.

11. This, then, is one essential difference between imagination and fancy; and another is like it, and resultant from it, that the imagination being at the heart of things, poises herself there, and is still, quiet, and brooding, comprehending all around her with her fixed look; but the fancy staying at the outside of things cannot see them all at once; but runs hither and thither, and round and about to see more and more, bounding merrily from point to point, and glittering here and there, but necessarily always settling, if she settle at all, on a point only, never embracing the whole.

And from these single points she can strike out analogies and catch resemblances, which, so far as the point she looks at is concerned, are true, but would be false, if she could see through to the other side. This, however, she cares not to do; the point of contact is enough for her, and even if there be a gap left between the two things and they do not quite touch, she will spring from one to the other like an electric spark, and be seen brightest in her leaping.

12. Now these differences between the imagination and the fancy hold, not only in the way they lay hold of separate conceptions, but even in the points they occupy of time; for the fancy loves to run hither and thither in time, and to follow long chains of circumstances from link to link; but the imagination, if it may, gets hold of a moment or link in the middle that implies all the rest, and fastens there. Hence Fuseli's aphorism: "Invention never

suffers the action to expire, nor the spectator's fancy to consume itself in preparation, or stagnate into repose. It neither begins from the egg, nor coldly gathers the remains."

In Retsch's illustrations to Schiller's Kampf mit dem Drachen, we have an instance, miserably feeble indeed, but characteristic and suited to our present purpose, of the detailing, finishing action of the fancy. The dragon is drawn from head to tail, vulture eyes, serpent teeth, forked tongue, fiery crest, armour, claws, and coils as grisly as may be; his den is drawn, and all the dead bones in it, and all the savage forest country about it far and wide; we have him, from the beginning of his career to the end, devouring, rampant, victorious over whole armies, gorged with death; we are present at all the preparations for his attack, see him receive his death-wound, and our anxieties are finally becalmed by seeing him lie peaceably dead on his back.

13. All the time we have never got into the dragon heart, we have never once felt real pervading horror, nor sense of the creature's being; it is throughout nothing but an ugly composition of claw and scale. Now take up Turner's Jason, Liber Studiorum, and observe how the imagination can concentrate all this, and infinitely more, into one moment. No far forest country, no secret paths, nor cloven hills; nothing but a gleam of pale horizontal sky, that broods over pleasant places far away, and sends in, through the wild overgrowth of the thicket, a ray of broken daylight into the hopeless pit. No flaunting plumes nor brandished lances, but stern purpose in the turn of the crestless helmet, visible victory in the drawing back of the prepared right arm behind the steady point. No more claws, nor teeth, nor manes, nor stinging tails. We have the dragon, like everything else, by the middle. We need see no more of him. All his horror is in that

fearful, slow, grinding upheaval of the single coil. Spark after spark of it, ring after ring, is sliding into the light, the slow glitter steals along him step by step, broader and broader, a lighting of funeral lamps one by one, quicker and quicker; a moment more, and he is out upon us, all crash and blaze, among those broken trunks;—but he will be nothing then to what he is now.

14. Now, it is necessary here very carefully to distinguish between that character of the work which depends on the imagination of the beholder, and that which results from the imagination of the artist; for a work is often called imaginative when it merely leaves room for the action of the imagination; whereas though nearly all imaginative works do this, yet it may be done also by works that have in them no imagination at all. A few shapeless scratches or accidental stains on a wall, or the forms of clouds, or any other complicated,

accidents, will set the imagination to work to coin something out of them; and all paintings in which there is much gloom or mystery, possess therein a certain sublimity owing to the play given to the beholder's imagination, without, necessarily, being in the slightest degree imaginative themselves. The vacancy of a truly imaginative work results not from absence of ideas, or incapability of grasping and detailing them, but from the painter having told the whole pith and power of his subject and disdaining to tell more; and the sign of this being the case is, that the mind of the beholder is forced to act in a certain mode, and feels itself overpowered and borne away by that of the painter, and not able to defend itself, nor go which way it will: and the value of the work depends on the truth, authority, and inevitability of this suggestiveness. Now observe in this work of Turner that the whole value of it depends on the character of curve assumed

by the serpent's body; for had it been a mere semicircle, or gone down in a series of smaller coils, it would have been, in the first case, ridiculous, as unlike a serpent, or in the second, disgusting, nothing more than an exaggerated viper; but it is that *coming straight* at the right hand which suggests the drawing forth of an enormous weight, and gives the bent part its springing look, that frightens us. Again, remove the light trunk * on the left, and observe how useless all the gloom of the picture would have been, if this trunk had not given it depth and *hollowness*. Finally and chiefly, observe that the painter is not satisfied even with all the suggestiveness thus obtained, but to make sure of us, and force us, whether we will or not, to walk his way, and not ours, the trunks of the trees on the right are all cloven into yawning and writhing

* I am describing from a proof: in bad impressions this trunk is darkened.

heads and bodies, and alive with dragon energy all about us; note especially the nearest with its gaping jaws and claw-like branch at the seeming shoulder; a kind of suggestion which in itself is not imaginative, but merely fanciful (using the term fancy in that third sense not yet explained, corresponding to the third office of imagination); but it is imaginative in its present use and application, for the painter addresses thereby that morbid and fearful condition of mind which he has endeavoured to excite in the spectator, and which in reality would have seen in every trunk and bough, as it penetrated into the deeper thicket, the object of its terror.

15. It is nevertheless evident, that however suggestive the work or picture may be, it cannot have effect unless we are ourselves both watchful of its every hint, and capable of understanding and carrying it out; and although I think that this power of continuing

or accepting the direction of feeling given is less a peculiar gift, like that of the original seizing, than a faculty dependent on attention and improvable by cultivation; yet, to a certain extent, the imaginative work will not, I think, be rightly esteemed except by a mind of some corresponding power: not but that there is an intense enjoyment in minds of feeble yet right conception in the help and food they get from those of stronger thought; but a certain imaginative susceptibility is at any rate necessary, and above all things earnestness and feeling; so that assuredly a work of high conceptive dignity will be always incomprehensible and valueless except to those who go to it in earnest and give it time; and this is peculiarly the case when the imagination acts not merely on the immediate subject, nor in giving a fanciful and peculiar character to prominent objects, as we have just seen, but busies itself throughout in expressing occult

and far-sought sympathies in every minor detail; of which action the most sublime instances are found in the works of Tintoret, whose intensity of imagination is such that there is not the commonest subject to which he will not attach a range of suggestiveness almost limitless; nor a stone, leaf, or shadow, nor anything so small, but he will give it meaning and oracular voice.

16. In the centre of the gallery at Parma, there is a canvas of Tintoret's, whose sublimity of conception and grandeur of colour are seen in the highest perfection, by their opposition to the morbid and vulgar sentimentalism of Correggio. It is an Entombment of Christ with a landscape distance, of whose technical composition and details I shall have much to say hereafter; at present I speak only of the thought it is intended to convey. An ordinary or unimaginative painter would have made prominent, among his objects of landscape,

such as might naturally be supposed to have been visible from the sepulchre, and shown with the crosses of Calvary, some portion of Jerusalem: but Tintoret has a far higher aim. Dwelling on the peculiar force of the event before him, as the fulfilment of the final prophecy respecting the Passion, "He made his grave with the wicked and with the *rich* in his death," he desires to direct the mind of the spectator to this receiving of the body of Christ, in its contrast with the houseless birth and the desert life. And, therefore, behind the ghastly tomb grass that shakes its black and withered blades above the rocks of the sepulchre, there is seen, not the actual material distance of the spot itself (though the crosses are shown faintly), but that to which the thoughtful spirit would return in vision, a desert place, where the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, and against the barred twilight of the melancholy sky

are seen the mouldering beams and shattered roofing of a ruined *cattle-shed*, the canopy of the Nativity.

17. Let us take another instance. No subject has been more frequently or exquisitely treated by the religious painters than that of the Annunciation; though, as usual, the most perfect type of its pure ideal has been given by Angelico, and by him with the most radiant consummation (so far as I know) in a small reliquary in the sacristy of Sta. Maria Novella. The background there, however, is altogether decorative; but, in the fresco of the corridor of St. Mark's, the concomitant circumstances are of exceeding loveliness. The Virgin sits in an open loggia, resembling that of the Florentine church of L'Annunziata. Before her is a meadow of rich herbage, covered with daisies. Behind her is seen, through the door at the end of the loggia, a chamber with a single grated window, through which a star-

light beam of light falls into the silence. All is exquisite in feeling, but not inventive nor imaginative. Severe would be the shock and painful the contrast, if we could pass in an instant from that pure vision to the wild thought of Tintoret. For not in meek reception of the adoring messenger, but startled by the rush of his horizontal and rattling wings, the Virgin sits, not in the quiet loggia, not by the green pasture of the restored soul, but houseless, under the shelter of a palace vestibule ruined and abandoned, with the noise of the axe and the hammer in her ears, and the tumult of a city round about her desolation. The spectator turns away at first, revolted, from the central object of the picture forced painfully and coarsely forward, a mass of shattered brickwork, with the plaster mildewed away from it, and the mortar mouldering from its seams; and if he look again, either at this or at the carpenter's tools beneath it, will perhaps see, in the

one and the other, nothing more than such a study of scene as Tintoret could but too easily obtain among the ruins of his own Venice, chosen to give a coarse explanation of the calling and the condition of the husband of Mary. But there is more meant than this. When he looks at the composition of the picture, he will find the whole symmetry of it depending on a narrow line of light, the edge of a carpenter's square, which connects these unused tools with an object at the top of the brickwork, a white stone, four square, the corner-stone of the old edifice, the base of its supporting column. This, I think, sufficiently explains the typical character of the whole. The ruined house is the Jewish dispensation; that obscurely arising in the dawning of the sky is the Christian; but the corner-stone of the old building remains, though the builders' tools lie idle beside it, and the stone which the builders refused is become the Headstone of the Corner.

18. In this picture, however, the force of the thought hardly atones for the painfulness of the scene and the turbulence of its feeling. The power of the master is more strikingly shown in his treatment of a subject which, however important, and however deep in its meaning, supplies not to the ordinary painter material enough ever to form a picture of high interest; the Baptism of Christ. From the purity of Giotto to the intolerable, inconceivable brutality of Salvator,* every order of feeling has been displayed in its treatment;

* The picture is in the Guadagni Palace. It is one of the most important landscapes Salvator ever painted. The figures are studied from street beggars. On the other side of the river, exactly opposite the point where the Baptism of Christ takes place, the painter, with a refinement of feeling peculiarly his own, has introduced some ruffians stripping off their shirts to bathe. He is fond of this incident. It occurs again in one of the marines of the Pitti Palace, with the additional interest of a foreshortened figure, swimming on its back, feet foremost, exactly in the stream of light to which the eye is principally directed.

but I am aware of no single case, except this of which I am about to speak, in which it has formed an impressive picture.

Giotto's, in the Academy of Florence, engraved in the series just published (Galleria delle belle Arti), is one of the most touching I know, especially in the reverent action of the attendant angels; and Leonardo's angel in that of Andrea del Verrocchio is very beautiful, but the event is one whose character and importance are ineffable upon the features; the descending dove hardly affects us, because its constant symbolical occurrence hardens us, and makes us look on it as a mere type or letter, instead of the actual presence of the Spirit: and by all the sacred painters the power that might be put into the landscape is lost; for though their use of foliage and distant sky or mountain is usually very admirable, as we shall see in the fifth chapter, yet they cannot deal with near water or rock; and

the hexagonal and basaltic protuberances of their river shore are, I think, too painful to be endured even by the most acceptant mind; as eminently in that of Angelico, in the Vita di Cristo, which, as far as I can judge, is a total failure in action, expression, and all else; and in general, it is in this subject especially that the greatest painters show their weakness. For this reason, I suppose, and feeling the difficulty of it, Tintoret has thrown into it his utmost strength, and it becomes noble in his hands by his most singularly imaginative expression, not only of the immediate fact, but of the whole train of thought of which it is suggestive; and by his considering the Baptism not only as the submission of Christ to the fulfilment of all righteousness, but as the opening of the earthly struggle with the prince of the powers of the air, which instantly beginning in the temptation, ended only on the cross.

19. The river flows fiercely under the shadow of a great rock.* From its opposite shore, thickets of close gloomy foliage rise against the rolling chasm of heaven, through which breaks the brightness of the descending Spirit. Across these, dividing them asunder, is stretched a horizontal floor of flaky cloud, on which stand the hosts of heaven. Christ kneels upon the water, and does not sink; the figure of St. John is indistinct, but close beside his raised right arm there is a spectre in the black shade; the Fiend, harpy-shaped, hardly seen, glares down upon Christ with eyes of fire, waiting his

* A farther examination of this picture has made me doubt my interpretation of some portions of it. It is nearly destroyed, and placed between two lights, and far from the eye, so as to render its details in many of the shadowed portions almost untraceable. I leave the passage unaltered, however, until I can obtain an opportunity of close access to the picture. The other works described are in fuller light and in better preservation, and the reader may accept with confidence the account given of them, which I have confirmed by re-examination.

time. Beneath this figure there comes out of the mist a dark hand, the arm unseen, extended to a net in the river, the spars of which are in the shape of a cross. Behind this the roots and under stems of the trees are cut away by the cloud, and beneath it, and through them, is seen a vision of wild, melancholy, boundless light, the sweep of the desert; and the figure of Christ is seen therein alone, with His arms lifted as in supplication or ecstasy, borne of the Spirit into the Wilderness to be tempted of the Devil.

There are many circumstances which combine to give to this noble work a more than usually imaginative character. The symbolical use of the net, which is the cross net still used constantly in the canals of Venice, and common throughout Italy, is of the same character as that of the carpenter's tools in the Annunciation; but the introduction of the spectral figure is of bolder reach, and yet more,

that vision of the after-temptation, which is expressly indicated as a subject of thought rather than of sight, because it is in a part of the scene which in *fact* must have been occupied by the trunks of the trees whose tops are seen above; and another circumstance completes the mystic character of the whole, that the flaky clouds which support the angelic hosts take on the right, where the light first falls upon them, the shape of the head of a fish, the well-known type both of the baptismal sacrament and of Christ.

20. But the most exquisite instance of this imaginative power occurs in an incident in the background of the Crucifixion. I will not insult this marvellous picture by an effort at a verbal account of it. I would not whitewash it with praise, and I refer to it only for the sake of two thoughts peculiarly illustrative of the intellectual faculty immediately under discussion. In the common and most Catholic

treatment of the subject, the mind is either painfully directed to the bodily agony, coarsely expressed by outward anatomical signs, or else it is permitted to rest on that countenance inconceivable by man at any time, but chiefly so in this its consummated humiliation. In the first case, the representation is revolting; in the second, inefficient, false, and sometimes blasphemous. None even of the greatest religious painters have ever, so far as I know, succeeded here; Giotto and Angelico were cramped by the traditional treatment, and the latter especially, as before observed, is but too apt to indulge in those points of vitiated feeling which attained their worst development among the Byzantines. Perugino fails in his Christ in almost every instance: of other men than these, after them, we need not speak. But Tintoret here, as in all other cases, penetrating into the root and deep places of his subject, despising all outward and bodily

appearances of pain, and seeking for some means of expressing not the rack of nerve or sinew, but the fainting of the deserted Son of God before His Eloi cry, and yet feeling himself utterly unequal to the expression of this by the countenance, has, on the one hand, filled his picture with such various and impetuous muscular exertion, that the body of the Crucified is, by comparison, in perfect repose, and, on the other, has cast the countenance altogether into shade. But the Agony is told by this, and by this only; that, though there yet remains a chasm of light on the mountain horizon where the earthquake darkness closes upon the day, the broad and sun-like glory about the head of the Redeemer has become wan, *and of the colour of ashes.**

* This circumstance, like most that lie not at the surface, has escaped Fuseli, though his remarks on the general tone of the picture are very good, as well as his opposition of it to the treatment of Rubens. (Lecture ix.)

But the great painter felt he had something more to do yet. Not only that Agony of the Crucified, but the tumult of the people, that rage which invoked His blood upon them and their children. Not only the brutality of the soldier, the apathy of the Centurion, or any other merely instrumental cause of the Divine suffering, but the fury of His own people, the noise against Him of those for whom He died, were to be set before the eye of the understanding, if the power of the picture was to be complete. This rage, be it remembered, was one of disappointed pride; and the disappointment dated essentially from the time when, but five days before, the King of Zion came, and was received with hosannahs, riding upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass To this time, then, it was necessary to direct the thoughts, for therein are found both the cause and the character, the excitement of, and the witness against, this madness of the people.

In the shadow behind the cross, a man, riding on an ass colt, looks back to the multitude while he points with a rod to the Christ crucified. The ass is feeding on the *remnants* of *withered palm-leaves.*

With this master-stroke, I believe, I may terminate all illustration of the peculiar power of the imagination over the feelings of the spectator, by the elevation into dignity and meaning of the smallest accessory circumstances. But I have not yet sufficiently dwelt on the fact from which this power arises, the absolute truth of statement of the central fact as it was, or must have been. Without this truth, this awful first moving principle, all direction of the feelings is useless. That which we cannot excite, it is of no use to know how to govern.

21. I have before alluded to the painfulness of Raffaelle's treatment of the Massacre of the Innocents. Fuseli affirms of it, that, "in

dramatic gradation he disclosed all the mother through every image of pity and of terror." If this be so, I think the philosophical spirit has prevailed over the imaginative. The imagination never errs; it sees all that is, and all the relations and bearings of it; but it would not have confused the mortal frenzy of maternal terror with various development of maternal character. Fear, rage, and agony, at their utmost pitch, sweep away all character: humanity itself would be lost in maternity, the woman would become the mere personification of animal fury or fear. For this reason all the ordinary representations of this subject are, I think, false and cold: the artist has not heard the shrieks, nor mingled with the fugitives; he has sat down in his study to convulse features methodically and philosophise over insanity. Not so Tintoret. Knowing, or feeling, that the expression of the human face was, in such circumstances, not to be rendered,

and that the effort could only end in an ugly falsehood, he denies himself all aid from the features, he feels that if he is to place himself or us in the midst of that maddened multitude, there can be no time allowed for watching expression. Still less does he depend on details of murder or ghastliness of death; there is no blood, no stabbing or cutting, but there is an awful substitute for these in the chiaroscuro. The scene is the outer vestibule of a palace, the slippery marble floor is fearfully barred across by sanguine shadows, so that our eyes seem to become bloodshot and strained with strange horror and deadly vision; a lake of life before them, like the burning seen of the doomed Moabite on the water that came by the way of Edom: a huge flight of stairs, without parapet, descends on the left; down this rush a crowd of women mixed with the murderers; the child in the arms of one has been seized by the limbs, *she*

hurls herself over the edge, and falls head downmost, dragging the child out of the grasp by her weight;—she will be dashed dead in a second;—close to us is the great struggle; a heap of the mothers, entangled in one mortal writhe with each other and the swords, one of the murderers dashed down and crushed beneath them, the sword of another caught by the blade and dragged at by a woman's naked hand; the youngest and fairest of the women, her child just torn away from a death grasp, and clasped to her breast with the grip of a steel vice, falls backwards, helplessly over the heap, right on the sword points; all knit together and hurled down in one hopeless, frenzied furious abandonment of body and soul in the effort to save. Far back, at the bottom of the stairs, there is something in the shadow like a heap of clothes. It is a woman, sitting quiet,—quite quiet,—still as any stone; she looks down steadfastly on her dead child, laid

along on the floor before her, and her hand is pressed softly upon her brow.

22. This, to my mind, is the only Imaginative, that is, the only true, real, heartfelt representation of the being and actuality of the subject, in existence.* I should exhaust the patience of the reader, if I were to dwell at length on the various stupendous developments of the imagination of Tintoret in the Scuola di San Rocco alone. I would fain join a while in that solemn pause of the journey into Egypt, where the silver boughs of the shadowy trees lace with their tremulous lines the alternate folds of fair cloud, flushed by faint crimson light, and lie across the streams of blue between those rosy islands, like the white wakes of wandering ships; or watch

* Note the shallow and uncomprehending notice of this picture by Fuseli. His description of the treatment of it by other painters is, however, true, terse, and valuable.

beside the sleep of the disciples, among those massy leaves that lie so heavily on the dead of the night beneath the descent of the angel of the agony, and toss fearfully above the motion of the torches as the troop of the betrayer emerges out of the hollows of the olives; or wait through the hour of accusing beside the judgment seat of Pilate, where all is unseen, unfelt, except the one figure that stands with its head bowed down, pale, like a pillar of moonlight, half bathed in the glory of the Godhead, half wrapt in the whiteness of the shroud.

23. Of these, and all the other thoughts of indescribable power that are now fading from the walls of those neglected chambers, I may perhaps endeavour at a future time to preserve some image and shadow more faithfully than by words; but I shall at present terminate our series of illustrations by reference to a work of less touching, but more tremendous

appeal; the Last Judgment in the Church of Santa Maria dell' Orto. In this subject, almost all realizing or local statement had been carefully avoided by the most powerful painters, they judging it better to represent its chief circumstances as generic thoughts, and present them to the mind in a typical or abstract form. In the Judgment of Angelico the treatment is purely typical; a long Campo Santo, composed of two lines of graves, stretches away into the distance; on the left side of it rise the condemned; on the right the just. With Giotto and Orcagna, the conception, though less rigid, is equally typical; no effort being made at the suggestion of space, and only so much ground represented as is absolutely necessary to support the near figures and allow space for a few graves. Michael Angelo in no respect differs in his treatment, except that his figures are less symmetrically grouped, and a greater conception of space is given

by their various perspective. No interest is attached to his background in itself. Fra Bartolomeo, never able to grapple with any species of sublimity except that of simple religious feeling, fails most signally in this mighty theme.* His group of the dead, including not more than ten or twelve figures, occupies the foreground only; behind them a vacant plain extends to the foot of a cindery volcano, about whose mouth several little black devils like spiders are skipping and crawling. The judgment of quick and dead is thus expressed as taking place in about a rood square, and on a single group; the whole of the space and horizon of the sky and land being left vacant, and the presence of the Judge of all the earth made more finite than the sweep of a whirlwind or a thunder-storm.

24. By Tintoret only has this unimaginable

* Fresco in an outhouse of the Ospedale Sta. Maria Nuova at Florence.

event been grappled with in its Verity; not typically nor symbolically, but as they may see it who shall not sleep but be changed. Only one traditional circumstance he has received with Dante and Michael Angelo, the Boat of the Condemned; but the impetuosity of his mind bursts out even in the adoption of this image; he has not stopped at the scowling ferryman of the one, nor at the sweeping blow and demon dragging of the other, but, seized Hylas-like by the limbs, and tearing up the earth in his agony, the victim is dashed into his destruction: nor is it the sluggish Lethe, nor the fiery lake that bears the cursed vessel, but the oceans of the earth and the waters of the firmament gathered into one white, ghastly cataract; the river of the wrath of God, roaring down into the gulf where the world has melted with its fervent heat, choked with the ruin of nations, and the limbs of its corpses tossed out of its whirling, like water-wheels. Bat-like,

out of the holes and caverns and shadows of the earth, the bones gather and the clay heaps heave, rattling and adhering into half-kneaded anatomies, that crawl, and startle, and struggle up among the putrid weeds, with the clay clinging to their clotted hair, and their heavy eyes sealed by the earth darkness yet, like his of old who went his way unseeing to the Siloam Pool; shaking off one by one the dreams of the prison-house, hardly hearing the clangour of the trumpets of the armies of God, blinded yet more, as they awake, by the white light of the new Heaven, until the great vortex of the four winds bears up their bodies to the judgment seat: the Firmament is all full of them, a very dust of human souls, that drifts, and floats, and falls in the interminable, inevitable light; the bright clouds are darkened with them as with thick snow, currents of atom life in the arteries of heaven, now soaring up slowly, and higher and higher

still, till the eye and the thought can follow no farther, borne up, wingless, by their inward faith and by the angel powers invisible, now hurled in countless drifts of horror before the breath of their condemnation.

25. Now, I wish the reader particularly to observe throughout all these works of Tintoret, the distinction of the Imaginative Verity from falsehood on the one hand, and from realism on the other. The power of every picture depends on the penetration of the imagination into the TRUE nature of the thing represented, and on the utter scorn of the imagination for all shackles and fetters of mere external fact that stand in the way of its suggestiveness. In the Baptism it cuts away the trunks of trees as if they were so much cloud or vapour, that it may exhibit to the thought the completed sequency of the scene;* in the Massacre

* The same thing is done yet more boldly in the large composition of the ceiling, the Plague of Fiery Serpents: a

it covers the marble floor with visionary light, that it may strike terror into the spectator without condescending to butchery; it defies the bare fact, but creates in him the fearful feeling; in the Crucifixion it annihilates locality, and brings the palm leaves to Calvary, so only that it may bear the mind to the Mount of Olives; as in the Entombment it brings the manger to Jerusalem, that it may take the heart to Bethlehem; and all this it does in the daring consciousness of its higher and spiritual verity, and in the entire knowledge of the fact and substance of all that it touches. The imaginary boat of the demon angel expands the rush of the visible river into the descent of irresistible condemnation; but to make that rush and roar felt by the eye, and heard by the ear, the rending of the pine branches above the cataract is taken directly

part of the host, and another sky horizon, are seen through an opening in the ground.

from nature; it is an abstract of Alpine storm. Hence while we are always placed face to face with whatever is to be told, there is in and beyond its reality a voice supernatural; and that which is doubtful in the vision has strength, sinew, and assuredness, built up in it by fact.

26. Let us, however, still advance one step farther, and observe the imaginative power deprived of all aid from chiaroscuro, colour, or any other means of concealing the framework of its thoughts.

It was said by Michael Angelo that "non ha l'ottimo scultore alcun concetto, ch' un marmo solo in se non circoscriva," a sentence which, though in the immediate sense intended by the writer, it may remind us a little of the indignation of Boileau's Pluto, "Il s'ensuit de-là que tout ce qui se peut dire de beau est dans les dictionnaires; il n'y a que les paroles qui sont transposées," yet is valuable, because it shows us that Michael Angelo held the

imagination to be entirely expressible in rock, and therefore altogether independent, in its own nature, of those aids of colour and shade by which it is recommended in Tintoret, though the sphere of its operation is of course by these incalculably extended. But the presence of the imagination may be rendered in marble as deep, thrilling, and awful as in painting, so that the sculptor seek for the soul and govern the body thereby.

27. Of unimaginative work, Bandinelli and Canova supply us with characteristic instances of every kind: the Hercules and Cacus of the former, and its criticism by Cellini, will occur at once to every one; the disgusting statue now placed so as to conceal Giotto's important tempera picture in Santa Croce is a better instance; but a still more impressive lesson might be received by comparing the inanity of Canova's garland grace, and ball-room sentiment, with the intense truth, tenderness, and

power of men like Mino da Fiesole, whose chisel leaves many a hard edge, and despises down and dimple, but it seems to cut light and carve breath, the marble burns beneath it, and becomes transparent with very spirit. Yet Mino stopped at the human nature; he saw the soul, but not the ghostly presences about it; it was reserved for Michael Angelo to pierce deeper yet, and to see the indwelling angels.

28. No man's soul is alone; Laocoon or Tobit, the serpent has it by the heart or the angel by the hand; the light or the fear of the Spiritual things that move beside it may be seen on the body; and that bodily form with Buonarroti, white, solid, distinct, material, though it be, is invariably felt as the instrument or the habitation of some infinite, invisible power. The earth of the Sistine Adam that begins to burn; the woman-embodied burst of Adoration from his sleep; the

twelve great torrents of the spirit of God that pause above us there, urned in their vessels of clay; the waiting in the shadow of futurity of those through whom the Promise and Presence of God went down from the Eve to the Mary, each still and fixed, fixed in his expectation, silent, foreseeing, faithful, seated each on his stony throne, the building stones of the word of God, building on and on, tier by tier, to the Refused one the head of the corner; not only these, not only the troops of terror torn up from the earth by the four-quartered winds of the Judgment, but every fragment and atom of stone that he ever touched became instantly inhabited by what makes the hair stand up and the words be few: the St. Matthew, not yet disengaged from his sepulchre, bound hand and foot by his grave clothes, it is left for us to loose him; the strange spectral wreath of the Florence Pieta, casting its pyramidal, distorted shadow, full of pain and death, among the

faint purple lights that cross and perish under the obscure dome of Sta. Maria Del Fiore; the white lassitude of joyous limbs, panther-like, yet passive, fainting with their own delight, that gleam among the Pagan formalisms of the Uffizii, far away, separating themselves in their lustrous lightness as the waves of an Alpine torrent do by their dancing from the dead stones, though the stones be as white as they;* and finally, and perhaps more than all, those four ineffable types, not of darkness nor of day—not of morning nor evening, but of the departure and the resurrection, the twilight and the dawn of the souls of men—together with the spectre sitting in the shadow of the niche above them;† all these, and all else that I could name of his forming, have borne, and in themselves retain and exercise

* The Bacchus. There is a small statue opposite it, also unfinished; but "a spirit still."

† I would have insisted more on the ghostly vitality of

the same inexplicable power—inexplicable because proceeding from an imaginative perception almost superhuman, which goes whither

this dreadful statue; but the passage referring to it in Rogers' Italy supersedes all further description. I suppose most lovers of art know it by heart:—

"Nor then forget that chamber of the dead,
Where the gigantic shapes of Night and Day,
Turned into stone, rest everlastingly;
Yet still are breathing and shed round at noon
A twofold influence,—only to be felt—
A light, a darkness, mingling each with each;
Both, and yet neither. There, from age to age,
Two ghosts are sitting on their sepulchres.
That is the Duke Lorenzo. Mark him well.
He meditates, his head upon his hand.
What from beneath his helm-like bonnet scowls?
Is it a face, or but an eyeless skull?
'Tis lost in shade; yet, like the basilisk,
It fascinates, and is intolerable.
His mien is noble, most majestical!
Then most so, when the distant choir is heard
At morn or eve—nor fail thou to attend
On that thrice-hallowed day, when all are there;
When all, propitiating with solemn songs,
Visit the Dead. Then wilt thou feel his power!"

It is strange that this should be the only written instance

we cannot follow, and is where we cannot come; throwing naked the final, deepest root of the being of man, whereby he grows out of the invisible, and holds on his God home.*

(as far as I recollect) of just and entire appreciation of Michael Angelo's spiritual power. It is perhaps owing to the very intensity of his imagination that he has been so little understood: for, as I before said, imagination can never be met by vanity, nor without earnestness. His Florentine followers saw in him an anatomist and posture-master: and *art was finally destroyed by the influence over admiring idiocy* of the greatest mind that art ever inspired. (I italicized the earliest expression of my sense of the destructive power in Michael Angelo: my own mind was, however, still itself in the state described of 'admiring idiocy' when I wrote the last words of the note.)

* I have not chosen to interrupt the argument respecting the essence of the imaginative faculty by any remarks on the execution of the imaginative hand; but we can hardly leave Tintoret and Michael Angelo without some notice of the pre-eminent power of execution exhibited by both of them, in consequence of their vigour and clearness of conception; nor without again warning the lower artist from confounding this velocity of decision and impatience with the velocity of affectation or indolence. Every result

29. Now, in all these instances, let it be observed—for it is to that end alone that I have been arguing all along—that the virtue of the Imagination is its reaching, by intuition and

of real imagination we have seen to be a truth of some sort; and it is the characteristic of truth to be in some way tangible, seizable, distinguishable, and clear, as it is of falsehood to be obscure, confused, and confusing. Not but that many, if not most truths have a dark side, a side by which they are connected with mysteries too high for us,—nay, I think it is commonly but a poor and miserable truth which the human mind can walk all round, but at all events they have one side by which we can lay hold of them, and feel that they are downright adamant, and that their form, though lost in cloud here and there, is unalterable and real, and not less real and rocky because infinite, and joined on, St. Michael's Mount-like, to a far mainland. So then, whatever the real imagination lays hold of, as it is a truth, does not alter into anything else, as the imaginative part works at it, and feels over it, and finds out more of it, but comes out more and more continually; all that is found out pointing to and indicating still more behind, and giving additional stability and reality to that which is discovered already. But if it be fancy or any other form of pseudo-imagination which is at work, then that which it gets hold of may not be a truth, but only an idea, which

intensity of gaze (not by reasoning, but by its authoritative opening and revealing power), a more essential truth than is seen at the surface of things. I repeat that it matters

will keep giving way as soon as we try to take hold of it, and turning into something else; so that, as we go on copying it, every part will be inconsistent with all that has gone before, and at intervals it will vanish altogether, and leave blanks which must be filled up by any means at hand. And in these circumstances, the painter, unable to seize his thought, because it has not substance nor bone enough to bear grasping, is liable to catch at every line that he lays down, for help and suggestion, and to be led away by it to something else, which the first effort to realize dissipates in like manner, placing another phantom in its stead; until, out of the fragments of these successive phantoms, he has glued together a vague, mindless, involuntary whole, a mixture of all that was trite or common in each of the successive conceptions, for that is necessarily what is first caught, a heap of things with the bloom off and the chill on, laborious, unnatural, inane, with its emptiness disguised by affectation, and its deadness enlivened by extravagance.

Necessarily, from these modes of conception, three vices of execution must result; and these are found in all those parts of the work where any trust has been put in concep-

not whether the reader is willing to call this faculty Imagination or not; I do not care about the name; but I would be understood when I speak of imagination hereafter, to mean

tion, and only to be avoided in portions of actual portraiture, for a thoroughly unimaginative painter can make no use of a study—all his studies are guesses and experiments, all are equally wrong, and so far felt to be wrong by himself that he will not work by any of them, but will always endeavour to improve upon them in the picture, and so lose the use of them. These three vices of execution are then —first, feebleness of handling, owing to uncertainty of intention; secondly, intentional carelessness of handling, in the hope of getting by accident something more than was meant; and, lastly, violence and haste of handling, in the effort to secure as much as possible of the obscure image of which the mind feels itself losing hold. I am throughout, it will be observed, attributing right feeling to the unimaginative painter; if he lack this, his execution may be cool and determined, as he will set down falsehood without blushing, and ugliness without suffering. Added to these various evidences of weakness, will be the various vices assumed for the sake of concealment; morbid refinements disguising feebleness,—or insolence and coarseness to cover desperation. When the imagination is powerful, the resulting execution is of course the contrary of all this:

this, the base of whose authority and being is its perpetual thirst for truth and purpose to be true. It has no food, no delight, no care, no perception, except of truth; it is for ever looking

its first steps will commonly be impetuous, in clearing its ground and getting at its first conception—as we know of Michael Angelo in his smiting his blocks into shape (see the passage quoted by Sir Charles Bell in the Essay on Expression, from Blaise de Vigenere), and as is visible in the handling of Tintoret always: as the work approaches completion, the stroke, while it remains certain and firm, because its end is always known, may frequently become slow and careful, both on account of the difficulty of following the pure lines of the conception, and because there is no fear felt of the conception's vanishing before it can be realized: but generally there is a certain degree of impetuosity visible in the works of all the men of high imagination when they are not working from a study, showing itself in Michael Angelo by the number of blocks he left unfinished, and by some slight evidences in those he completed of his having worked painfully towards the close; so that, except the Duke Lorenzo, the Bacchus of the Florentine Gallery, and the Pieta of Genoa, I know not any of his finished works in which his mind is as mightily expressed as in his marble sketches; only, it is always to be observed that impetuosity or rudeness of hand is not necessarily—

under masks, and burning up mists; no fairness of form, no majesty of seeming will satisfy it; the first condition of its existence is incapability of being deceived; and though

and, if imaginative, is never—carelessness. In the two landscapes at the end of the Scuola di San Rocco, Tintoret has drawn several large tree trunks with two strokes of his brush—one for the dark, and another for the light side; and the large rock at the foot of the picture of the Temptation is painted with a few detached touches of grey over a flat brown ground; but the touches of the tree trunks have been followed by the mind as they went down with the most painful intensity through their every undulation; and the few grey strokes on the stone are so considered that a better stone could not be painted if we took a month to it: and I suppose, generally, it would be utterly impossible to give an example of execution in which less was left to accident, or in which more care was concentrated in every stroke, than the seemingly regardless and impetuous handling of this painter.

On the habit of both Tintoret and Michael Angelo to work straight forward from the block and on the canvas, without study or model, it is needless to insist; for though this is one of the most amazing proofs of their imaginative power, it is a dangerous precedent. No mode of execution ought ever to be taught to a young artist as better than another;

it sometimes dwells upon and substantiates the fictions of fancy, yet its own operation is to trace to their farthest limit the true laws and likelihoods even of the fictitious creation. This has been well explained by Fuseli, in his allusion to the Centaur of Zeuxis; and there is not perhaps a greater exertion of imaginative power than may be manifested in following out to their farthest limits the necessary consequences of such arbitrary combination; but let not the jests of the fancy be confounded

he ought to understand the truth of what he has to do; felicitous execution will follow as a matter of course; and if he feels himself capable of getting at the right at once, he will naturally do so without reference to precedent. He ought to hold always that his duty is to attain the highest result he can—but that no one has any business with the means or time he has taken. If it can be done quickly, let it be so done; if not, let it be done at any rate. For knowing his way he is answerable, and therefore must not walk *doubtingly;* but no one can blame him for walking *cautiously*, if the way be a narrow one, with a slip on each side. He may pause, but he must not hesitate—and tremble, but must not vacillate.

with that after serious work of the imagination which gives them all the nervous verity and substance of which they are capable. Let not the monsters of Chinese earthenware be confounded with the Faun, Satyr, or Centaur.

30. How different this definition of the Imagination may be from the idea of it commonly entertained among us, I can hardly say, because I have a very indistinct idea of what is usually meant by the term. I hear modern works constantly praised as being imaginative, in which I can trace no virtue of any kind; but simple, slavish, unpalliated falsehood and exaggeration. I see not what merit there can be in pure, ugly, resolute fiction; it is surely easy enough to be wrong; there are many ways of being unlike nature. I understand not what virtue that is which entitles one of these ways to be called imaginative, rather than another; and I am still farther embarrassed by hearing the portions of those

works called especially imaginative in which there is the most effort at minute and mechanical statement of contemptible details, and in which the artist would have been as actual and absolute in imitation as an echo, if he had known how. Against convictions which I do not understand I cannot argue; but I may warn the artist that imagination of this strange kind is not capable of bearing the time test; nothing of its doing has continued its influence over men; and if he desires to take place among the great men of older time, there is but one way for it; and one kind of imagination that will stand the immortal light: I know not how far it is by effort cultivable; but we have evidence enough before us to show in what direction that effort must be made.

31. We have seen (§ 10) that the Imagination is in no small degree dependent on acuteness of moral emotion; in fact, all moral truth can only thus be apprehended—and it is observable,

generally, that all true and deep emotion is imaginative, both in conception and expression; and that the mental sight becomes sharper with every full beat of the heart: and, therefore, all egotism, and selfish care, or regard, are, in proportion to their constancy, destructive of imagination; whose play and power depend altogether on our being able to forget ourselves and enter, like possessing spirits, into the bodies of things about us.

32. Again, as the Life of Imagination is in the discovering of truth, it is clear it can have no respect for sayings or opinions; knowing in itself when it has invented truly, restless and tormented except when it has this knowledge, its sense of success or failure is too acute to be affected by praise or blame. Sympathy it desires—but can do without; of opinions it is regardless, not in pride, but because it is conscious of a rule of action and object of aim in which it cannot be mistaken: partly, also, in

pure energy of desire, and longing to do and to invent more and more, which suffer it not to suck the sweetness of praise—unless a little with the end of the rod in its hand, and without pausing in its march. It goes straight forward up the hill; no voices nor mutterings can turn it back, nor petrify it from its purpose.*

33. Finally, it is evident, that, like the theoretic faculty, the imagination must be fed constantly by external nature—after the illustrations we have given, this may seem mere truism, for it is clear that to the exercise of the penetrative faculty a subject of penetration is necessary; but I note it because many painters of powerful mind have been lost to the world by their suffering the restless writhing of their imagination in its cage to take place of its healthy and exulting activity in the

* That which we know of the lives of M. Angelo and Tintoret is eminently illustrative of this temper.

fields of nature. The most imaginative men always study the hardest and are the most thirsty for new knowledge. Fancy plays like a squirrel in its circular prison, and is happy; but Imagination is a pilgrim on the earth—and her home is in heaven. Shut her from the fields of the celestial mountains—bar her from breathing their lofty, sun-warmed air; and we may as well turn upon her the last bolt of the Tower of Famine, and give the keys to the keeping of the wildest surge that washes Capraja and Gorgona.

CHAPTER IV.

Of Imagination Contemplative.

1. WE have, in the two preceding chapters, arrived at definite conclusions, respecting the power and essence of the imaginative faculty. In these two acts of penetration and combination, its separating and characteristic attributes are entirely developed; it remains for us only to observe a certain habit or mode of operation in which it frequently delights, and by which it addresses itself to our perceptions more forcibly, and asserts its presence more distinctly than in those mighty but more secret workings wherein its life consists.

In our examination of the combining imagination, we chose to assume the first or simple

conception to be as clear in the absence as in the presence of the object of it. This, I suppose, is, in point of fact, never the case, nor is an approximation to such distinctness of conception always a characteristic of the imaginative mind. Many persons have thorough and felicitous power of drawing from memory, yet never originate a thought, nor excite an emotion.

2. The form in which conception actually occurs to ordinary minds appears to derive value and preciousness from that indefiniteness which we alluded to in the second chapter (§ 2); for there is an unfailing charm in the memory and anticipation of things beautiful, more sunny and spiritual than attaches to their presence; for with their presence it is possible to be sated, and even wearied, but with the imagination of them never; in so far that it needs some self-discipline to prevent the mind from falling into a morbid condition of

dissatisfaction with all that it immediately possesses, and continual longing for things absent: and yet I think this charm is not justly to be attributed to the mere vagueness and uncertainty of the conception, except thus far, that of objects whose substantial presence was painful, the sublimity and impressiveness, if there were any, are retained in the conception, while the sensual offensiveness is withdrawn; thus circumstances of horror may be safely touched in verbal description, and for a time dwelt upon by the mind as often by Homer and Spenser (by the latter frequently with too much grossness), which could not for a moment be regarded or tolerated in their reality, or on canvas; and besides this mellowing and softening operation on those it retains, the conceptive faculty has the power of letting go many of them altogether out of its groups of ideas, and retaining only those where the "meminisse juvabit" will apply; and in

this way the entire group of memories becomes altogether delightful.

3. But of those parts of anything which are in themselves beautiful, I think the indistinctness no benefit, but that the brighter they are the better; and that the peculiar charm we feel in conception results from its grasp and blending of ideas rather than from their obscurity; for we do not usually recall, as we have seen, one part at a time only of a pleasant scene, one moment only of a happy day; but together with each single object we summon up a kind of crowded and involved shadowing forth of all the other glories with which it was associated, and into every moment we concentrate an epitome of the day; and it will happen frequently that even when the visible objects or actual circumstances are not in detail remembered, the feeling and joy of them are obtained we know not how or whence: and so, with a kind of conceptive burning-glass, we

bend the sunshine of all the day, and the fulness of all the scene, upon every point that we successively seize; and this together with more vivid action of Fancy, for I think that the wilful and playful seizures of the points that suit her purpose and help her springing, whereby she is distinguished from simple conception, take place more easily and actively with the memory of things than in presence of them. But, however this be, and I confess that there is much that I cannot satisfactorily to myself unravel with respect to the nature of simple conception, it is evident that this agreeableness, whatever it be, is not by art attainable, for all art is, in some sort, realization; it may be the realization of obscurity or indefiniteness, but still it must differ from the mere *conception* of obscurity and indefiniteness; so that whatever emotions depend absolutely on imperfectness of conception, as the horror of Milton's Death, cannot be rendered

by art; for art can only lay hold of things which have shape, and destroys by its touch the fearfulness or pleasurableness of those "which shape have none."

4. But on this indistinctness of conception, itself comparatively valueless and unaffecting, is based the operation of the Imaginative faculty with which we are at present concerned, and in which its glory is consummated; whereby, depriving the subject of material and bodily shape, and regarding such of its qualities only as it chooses for particular purpose, it forges these qualities together in such groups and forms as it desires, and gives to their abstract being consistency and reality, by striking them as it were with the die of an image belonging to other matter, which stroke having once received, they pass current at once in the peculiar conjunction and for the peculiar value desired.

Thus, in the description of Satan quoted in

the first chapter, "And like a comet burned," the bodily shape of the angel is destroyed, the inflaming of the formless spirit is alone regarded; and this, and his power of evil, associated in one fearful and abstract conception, are stamped to give them distinctness and permanence with the image of the comet, "That fires the length of Ophiuchus huge." Yet this could not be done, but that the image of the comet itself is in a measure indistinct, capable of awful expansion, and full of threatening and fear. Again, in his fall, the imagination gathers up the thunder, the resistance, the massy prostration, separates them from the external form, and binds them together by the help of that image of the mountain half sunk; which again would be unfit but for its own indistinctness, and for that glorious addition "with all his pines," whereby a vitality and spear-like hostility are communicated to its falling form; and the fall is

marked as not utter subversion, but sinking only, the pines remaining in their uprightness and unity and threatening of darkness upon the descended precipice; and again, in that yet more noble passage at the close of the fourth book, where almost every operation of the contemplative imagination is concentrated; the angelic squadron first gathered into one burning mass by the single expression "sharpening in mooned horns," then told out in their unity and multitude and stooped hostility, by the image of the wind upon the corn; Satan endowed with godlike strength and endurance in that mighty line, "Like Teneriff or Atlas, unremoved," with infinitude of size the next instant, and with all the vagueness and terribleness of spiritual power, by the "Horrour plumed," and the "*what seemed* both spear and shield."

5. The third function of Fancy already spoken of as subordinate to this of the

Imagination, is the highest of which she is capable; like the Imagination, she beholds in the things submitted to her treatment things different from the actual; but the suggestions she follows are not in their nature essential in the object contemplated; and the images resulting, instead of illustrating, may lead the mind away from it, and change the current of contemplative feeling: for, as in her operation parallel to Imagination penetrative we saw her dwelling upon external features, while the nobler sister faculty entered within; so now, when both, from what they see and know in their immediate object, are conjuring up images illustrative or elevatory of it, the Fancy necessarily summons those of mere external relationship, and therefore of unaffecting influence; while the Imagination, by every ghost she raises, tells tales about the prison house, and therefore never loses her power over the heart, nor her unity of emotion. On

the other hand, the regardant or contemplative action of Fancy is in this different from, and in this nobler than, that mere seizing and likeness-catching operation we saw in her before; that, when contemplative, she verily believes in the truth of the vision she has summoned, loses sight of actuality, and beholds the new and spiritual image faithfully and even seriously; whereas, before, she summoned no spiritual image, but merely caught the vivid actuality, or the curious resemblance of the real object; not that these two operations are separate, for the Fancy passes gradually from mere vivid sight of reality, and witty suggestion of likeness, to a ghostly sight of what is unreal; and through this, in proportion as she begins to feel, she rises towards and partakes of Imagination itself; for Imagination and Fancy are continually united, and it is necessary, when they are so, carefully to distinguish the feelingless part which is Fancy's,

from the sentient part, which is Imagination's. Let us take a few instances. Here is Fancy; first, very beautiful, in her simple capacity of likeness-catching:

> "To-day we purpose—ay, this hour we mount
> To spur three leagues towards the Apennine.
> Come down, we pray thee, ere the *hot sun count*
> *His dewy rosary* on the eglantine."

Seizing on the outside resemblances of bead form, and on the slipping from their threading bough one by one, the fancy is content to lose the heart of the thing, the solemnity of prayer; or perhaps I do the glorious poet wrong in saying this, for the sense of a sun worship and orison in beginning its race, may have been in his mind; and so far as it was so, the passage is imaginative and not fanciful. But that which most readers would accept from it, is the mere flash of the external image, in whose truth the Fancy herself does not yet believe, and therefore is not yet contemplative. Here,

however, is Fancy believing in the images she creates:

"It feeds the quick growth of the serpent-vine,
And the dark linked ivy tangling wild,
And budding, blown, or odour-faded blooms,
Which *star the winds with points of coloured light*
As they rain through them; and *bright golden globes*
Of fruit suspended in their own green heaven."

It is not, observe, a mere likeness that is caught here; but the flowers and fruit are entirely deprived by the fancy of their material existence, and contemplated by her seriously and faithfully as stars and worlds; yet it is only external likeness that she catches; she forces the resemblance, and lowers the dignity of the adopted image.

Next take two delicious stanzas of Fancy regardant (believing in her creations), followed by one of heavenly imagination, from Wordsworth's address to the daisy:

"A Nun demure—of lowly port;
Or sprightly maiden—of Love's court,—
In thy simplicity the sport

Of all temptations.
A queen in crown of rubies drest,
A starveling in a scanty vest,
Are all as seems to suit thee best,—
Thy appellations.

"I see thee glittering from afar,
And then thou art a pretty star,—
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee.
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest
Who shall reprove thee!

"Sweet flower—for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast—
Sweet silent creature,
That breath'st with me, in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature."

6. Observe how spiritual, yet how wandering and playful, the fancy is in the first two stanzas, and how far she flies from the matter in hand; never stopping to brood on

the character of any one of the images she summons, and yet for a moment truly seeing and believing in them all; while in the last stanza the imagination returns with its deep feeling to the heart of the flower, and "*cleaves fast*" to that. Compare the operation of the Imagination in Coleridge, on one of the most trifling objects that could possibly have been submitted to its action:

> "The thin blue flame
> Lies on my low-burnt fire, and quivers not:
> Only that film which fluttered on the grate
> Still flutters there, the sole unquiet thing.
> Methinks its motion in this hush of nature
> Gives it dim sympathies with me, who live,
> Making it a companionable form,
> Whose puny flaps and freaks the idling spirit
> By its own moods interprets, everywhere
> Echo or mirror seeking of itself,
> And makes a toy of thought."

Lastly, observe the sweet operation of Fancy regardant, in the following well-known passage from Scott, where both her beholding

and transforming powers are seen in their simplicity:

"The rocky summits, split and rent,
Formed turret, dome, or battlement,
Or seemed fantastically set
With cupola or minaret.
Nor were these earth-born castles bare,
Nor lacked they many a banner fair.
For, from their shivered brows displayed,
Far o'er th' unfathomable glade,
All twinkling with the dew-drop sheen,
The briar-rose fell, in streamers green,—
And creeping shrubs of thousand dyes
Waved in the west wind's summer sighs."

Let the reader refer to this passage, with its pretty tremulous conclusion above the pine tree, "where glistening streamers waved and danced," and then compare with it the following, where the Imagination operates on a scene nearly similar:

"Grey rocks did peep from the spare moss, and stemmed
The struggling brook; tall spires of windlestrae
Threw their thin shadows down the rugged slope,
And nought but gnarled roots of ancient pines,

Branchless and blasted, clenched, with grasping roots
The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here
Yet ghastly. For, *as fast years flow away,*
The smooth brow gathers, and the hair grows thin
And white; and, where irradiate dewy eyes
Had shone, gleam stony orbs; so from his steps
Bright flowers departed, and the beautiful shade
Of the green groves, with all their odorous winds
And musical motions. . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . Where the pass extends
Its stony jaws, the abrupt mountain breaks,
And seems with its accumulated crags
To overhang the world; for wide expand
Beneath the wan stars, and descending moon.
Islanded seas, blue mountains, mighty streams,
Dim tracts and vast, robed in the lustrous gloom
Of leaden-coloured even, and fiery hills
Mingling their flames with twilight, on the verge
Of the remote horizon. The near scene,
In naked and severe simplicity,
Made contrast with the universe. A pine
Rock-rooted, stretch'd athwart the vacancy
Its swinging boughs, to each *inconstant blast*
Yielding one only response at each pause,
In most familiar cadence, with the howl,
The thunder, and the hiss of *homeless* streams,
Mingling its solemn song."

In this last passage, the mind never departs from its solemn possession of the solitary scene, the Imagination only giving weight, meaning, and strange human sympathies to all its sights and sounds.

In that from Scott* the Fancy, led away by the outside resemblance of floating form and hue to the banners, loses the feeling and possession of the scene, and places herself in circumstances of character completely opposite

* Let it not be supposed that I mean to compare the sickly dreaming of Shelley over clouds and waves, with the masculine and magnificent grasp of men and things which we find in Scott; it only happens that these two passages are more illustrative, by the likeness of the scenery they treat, than any others I could have opposed, and that Shelley is peculiarly distinguished by the faculty of Contemplative imagination. Scott's healthy and truthful feeling would not allow him to represent the benighted hunter, provoked by loss of game, horse, and way at once, as indulging in any more exalted flights of imagination than those naturally consequent on the contrast between the night's lodging he expected, and that which befitted him.

to the quietness and grandeur of the natural objects; this would have been unjustifiable, but that the resemblance occurs to the mind of the monarch, rather than to that of the poet; and it is that which, of all others, would have been the most likely to occur at the time; in this point of view it has high imaginative propriety. Of the same fanciful character is that transformation of the tree trunks into dragons noticed before in Turner's Jason; and in the same way this becomes imaginative, as it exhibits the effect of Fear in disposing to morbid perception. Compare with it the real and high action of the Imagination on the same matter in Wordsworth's Yew trees (perhaps the most vigorous and solemn bit of forest landscape ever painted): —

> "Each particular trunk a growth
> Of intertwisted fibres serpentine,
> Up-coiling and inveterately convolved,
> *Nor uninformed with Phantasy, and looks*
> *That threaten the profane.*"

It is too long to quote, but the reader should refer to it: let him note especially, if painter, that pure touch of colour, "By sheddings from the pining umbrage tinged."

In the same way the blasted trunk on the left, in Turner's drawing of the spot where Harold fell at the battle of Hastings, takes, where its boughs first separate, the shape of the head of an arrow; this, which is mere fancy in itself, is imagination as it supposes in the spectator an excited condition of feeling dependent on the history of the spot.

7. I have been led perhaps into too great detail in illustrating these points; but I think it is of no small importance to prove how in all cases the Imagination is based upon, and appeals to, a deep heart feeling; and how faithful and earnest it is in contemplation of the subject-matter, never losing sight of it, nor disguising it, but depriving it of extraneous and material accidents, and regarding it in its

disembodied essence. I have not, however, sufficiently noted, in opposition to it, that diseased action of the fancy which depends more on nervous temperament than intellectual power; and which, as in dreaming, fever, insanity, and other morbid conditions of mind, is frequently a source of daring and inventive conception; and so the visionary appearances resulting from disturbances of the frame by passion, and from the rapid tendency of the mind to invest with shape and intelligence the active influences about it, as in the various demons, spirits, and fairies of all imaginative nations; which, however, I consider are no more to be ranked as right creations of fancy or imagination than things actually seen and heard; for the action of the nerves is, I suppose, the same, whether externally caused, or from within, although very grand imagination may be shown by the intellectual anticipation and realization of such impressions, as in that

glorious vignette of Turner's to the voyage of Columbus. "Slowly along the evening sky they went." Note especially how admirably true to the natural form, and yet how suggestive of the battlement, he has rendered the level flake of evening cloud.

8. I believe that it is unnecessary for me to enter into farther detail of illustration respecting these points; for fuller explanation of the operations of the contemplative faculty of things verbally expressible, the reader may be referred to Wordsworth's preface to his poems; it only remains for us, here, to examine how far this imaginative or abstract conception is to be conveyed by the material art of the sculptor or the painter.

Now, it is evident that the bold action of either the fancy or the imagination, dependent on a bodiless and spiritual image of the object, is not to be by lines or colours represented. We cannot, in the painting of Satan fallen,

suggest any image of pines or crags; neither can we assimilate the briar and the banner, nor give human sympathy to the motion of the film, nor voice to the swinging of the pines.

9. Yet certain powers there are, within due limits, of marking the thing represented with an ideal character; and it was to these powers that I alluded in defining the meaning of the term Ideal, in the second chapter of the preceding section. For it is by this operation that the productions of high art are separated from those of the Realist.

And, first, there is evidently capability of separating colour and form, and considering either separately. Form we find abstractedly considered by the sculptor; how far it would be possible to advantage a statue by the addition of colour, I venture not to affirm; the question is too extensive to be here discussed. High authorities, and ancient practice, are in

favour of colour; so the sculptor of the middle ages. The two statues of Mino da Fiesole in the church of St^a. Caterina at Pisa have been coloured, the irises of the eyes painted dark, and the hair gilded, as also I think the Madonna in St^a. Maria della Spina; the eyes have been painted in the sculptures of Orcagna in Or San Michele. But it looks like a remnant of barbarism (compare the pulpit of Guido da Como, in the church of San Bartolomeo at Pistoja); and I have never seen colour on any solid forms, that did not, to my mind, neutralize all other power: the porcelains of Luca della Robbia are painful examples; and, in lower art, Florentine mosaic in relief. Gilding is more admissible, and tells sometimes sweetly upon figures of quaint design, as on the pulpit of St^a. Maria Novella, while it spoils the classical ornaments of the mouldings. But the truest grandeur of sculpture I believe to be in the white form; something of this

feeling may be owing to the difficulty, or rather the impossibility, of obtaining truly noble colour upon it; but if we could colour the Elgin marbles with the flesh tint of Giorgione, I had rather not have it done.

10. Colour, without form, is less frequently obtainable; and it may be doubted whether it be desirable; yet I think that to the full enjoyment of it a certain sacrifice of form is necessary; sometimes by reducing it to the shapeless glitter of the gem, as often Tintoret and Bassano; sometimes by loss of outline and blending of parts, as Turner; sometimes by flatness of mass, as often Giorgione and Titian. How far it is possible for the painter to represent those mountains of Shelley as the poet sees them, "mingling *their flames* with twilight," I cannot say; but my impression is, that there is no true abstract mode of considering colour; and that all the loss of form in the works of Titian or Turner is not

ideal, but the representation of the natural conditions under which bright colour is seen; for form is always in a measure lost by Nature herself when colour is very vivid.

11. Again, there is capability of representing the essential character, form, and colour of an object, without external texture. On this point much has been said by Reynolds and others, and it is, indeed, perhaps the most unfailing characteristic of great manner in painting. Compare a dog of Edwin Landseer with a dog of Paul Veronese. In the first, the outward texture is wrought out with exquisite dexterity of handling, and minute attention to all the accidents of curl and gloss which can give appearance of reality; while the hue and power of the sunshine, and the truth of the shadow, on all these forms are neglected, and the large relations of the animal, as a mass of colour, to the sky or ground, or other parts of the picture, utterly lost. This is realism

at the expense of ideality; it is treatment essentially unimaginative.* With Veronese, there is no curling nor crisping, no glossiness nor sparkle, hardly even hair; a mere type of hide, laid on with a few scene-painter's touches: but the essence of dog is there; the entire, magnificent, generic animal type, muscular and living, and with broad, pure, sunny daylight upon him, and bearing his true and harmonious relation of colour to all colour about him. This is ideal treatment.

The same treatment is found in the works of all the greatest men; they all paint the lion more than his mane, and the horse rather

* I do not mean to withdraw the praise I have given, and shall always be willing to give to pictures, such as the Shepherd's Chief Mourner, and many others, in which the soul, if we may so call it, of animals, has been explained to us in modes hitherto unfelt and unexampled.

But Mr. Landseer is much more a natural historian than a painter; and the power of his works depends more on his knowledge and love of animals—on his understanding of their minds and ways—on his unerring notice and

than his hide; and I think also they are often more careful to obtain the right expression of large and universal light and colour, than accuracy of features; for the warmth of sunshine, and the force of sunlighted hue, are always sublime on whatever subject they may be exhibited; and so also are light and shade, if grandly arranged, as may be well seen in an etching of Rembrandt's of a spotted shell, which he has made altogether sublime by broad truth and large ideality of light and shade: and so we find frequent instances of very grand ideality in treatment of the most commonplace still life, by our own Hunt,

memory of their gestures and expressions, than on artistical or technical excellence. He never aims at colour —his composition is always weak, and sometimes unskilful; and his execution, though partially dexterous, and admirably adapted to the imitation of certain textures and surfaces, is far from being that of a great painter, attained by the mastery of every various difficulty, and changefully adapted to the treatment of every object. Compare the notes at the end of this volume.

where the petty glosses, and delicacies, and minor forms, are all merged in a broad glow of suffused colour; so also in pieces of the same kind by Etty, where, however, though the richness and play of colour are greater and the arrangement grander, there is less expression of light; neither is there anything in modern art that can be set beside some choice passages of Hunt in this respect.

12. Again, it is possible to represent objects capable of various accidents in a generic or symbolical form.

How far this may be done with things having necessary form as animals, I am not prepared to say. The Lions of the Egyptian room in the British Museum, and the Fish beside Michael Angelo's Jonah, are instances; and there is imaginative power about both which we find not in the more perfectly realised Florentine boar, nor in Raffaelle's fish of the Draught. And yet the propriety

and nobility of these types depend on the architectural use and character of the one, and on the typical meaning of the other; we should be grieved to see the forms of the Egyptian lion substituted for those of Raffaelle's in its struggle with Samson, nor would the whale of Michael Angelo be tolerated in the nets of Gennesaret. So that I think it is only when the figure of the creature stands, not for any representation of vitality, but merely for a letter or type of certain symbolical meaning, or else is adopted as a form of decoration or support in architecture, that such generalization is allowable; and in such circumstances it is perhaps necessary to adopt a typical form.

13. The evil consequences of the opposite treatment are ludicrously exhibited in the St. Peter of Carlo Dolci in the Pitti Palace, which owing to the prominent, glossy-plumed, and crimson-combed cock, is liable to be taken

for the portrait of a poulterer; only let it be observed that the treatment of the animal form here is offensive, not only from its realization, but from the pettiness and meanness of its realization; for it might, in other hands than Carlo Dolci's, have been a sublime cock, though a real one; but, in his, it is fit for nothing but the spit. Compare, as an example partly of symbolical treatment, partly of magnificent realization, that supernatural lion of Tintoret (in the picture of the Doge Loredano before the Madonna) with the plumes of his mighty wings clashed together in cloudlike repose, and the strength of the sea winds shut within their folding. And note, farther, the difference between the typical use of the animal, as in this case, and that of the fish of Jonah (and again the fish before mentioned whose form is indicated in the clouds of the Baptism), and the actual occurrence of the creature itself, with concealed meaning, as

the ass colt of the Crucifixion, which it was necessary to paint as such, and not as an ideal form.

14. I cannot enter here into the question of the exact degree of severity and abstraction necessary in the forms of living things architecturally employed; my own feeling on the subject is, though I dare not lay it down as a principle (with the Parthenon pediment standing against me like the shield of Ajax), that no perfect representation of animal form is right in architectural decoration. For my own part, I had much rather see the metopes in the Elgin room of the British Museum, and the Parthenon without them, than have them together; and I would not surrender, in an *architectural* point of view, one mighty line of the colossal, quiet, life-in-death statue mountains of Egypt with their narrow fixed eyes and hands on their rocky limbs, nor one Romanesque façade with its porphyry mosaic of indefinable monsters,

nor one Gothic moulding of rigid saints and grinning goblins, for ten Parthenons.

15. And, I believe, I could show some rational ground for this seeming barbarity, if this were the place to do so; but at present I can only ask the reader to compare the effect of the so-called barbarous ancient mosaics on the front of St. Mark's (as they have been recorded, happily, by the faithfulness of the good Gentile Bellini, in one of his pictures now in the Venice Gallery) with the veritably barbarous pictorial substitutions of the seventeenth century (one only of the old mosaics remains, or did remain till lately, over the northern door, but it is probably by this time torn down by some of the Venetian committees of taste); and also I would have the old portions of the interior ceiling, or of the mosaics of Murano and Torcello, and the glorious Cimabue mosaic of Pisa, and the roof of the Baptistery at Parma (that of the Florence Baptistery

is a bad example, owing to its crude whites and complicated mosaic of small forms), all of which are as barbarous as they can well be, in a certain sense, but mighty in their barbarism, compared with any architectural decorations whatsoever, consisting of professedly perfect animal forms, from the vile frescoes of Federigo Zuccaro at Florence to the ceiling of the Sistine; and, again, compare the professedly perfect sculpture of Milan Cathedral with the statues of the porches of Chartres: only be it always observed that it is not rudeness and ignorance of art, but intellectually awful abstraction that I would uphold: and also be it noted that in all ornament which takes place in the general effect merely as so much fretted stone, in capitals and other pieces of minute detail, the forms may be, and perhaps ought to be, elaborately imitative; and in this respect again the capitals of St. Mark's church, and at the Doge's palace at Venice,

may be an example to the architects of all the world, in their boundless inventiveness, unfailing elegance, and elaborate finish. There is more mind poured out in turning a single angle of that church than would serve to build a modern cathedral.*

16. So far, then, of the abstraction proper to architecture, and to symbolical uses, of which I shall have occasion to speak hereafter

* I have not brought forward any instances of the Imaginative power in architecture, as my object is not at present to exhibit its operation in all matter, but only to define its essence; but it may be well to note, in our New Houses of Parliament, how far a building approved by a committee of Taste may proceed without manifesting either imagination or composition. It remains to be seen how far the towers may redeem it; and I allude to it at present unwillingly, and only in the desire of influencing, so far as I may, those who have the power to prevent the adoption of a design for a bridge to take the place of that of Westminster, which was exhibited in 1844 at the Royal Academy professing to be in harmony with the new building, but which was fit only to carry a railroad over a canal. (The existing bridge, to wit.)

at length, referring to it only at present as one of the operations of imagination contemplative; other abstractions there are which are necessarily consequent on the imperfection of materials, as of the hair in sculpture, which is necessarily treated in masses that are in no sort imitative, but only stand for hair, and have the grace, flow, and feeling of it without the texture or division; and other abstractions there are in which the form of one thing is fancifully indicated in the matter of another; as in phantoms and cloud shapes, the use of which, in mighty hands, is often most impressive, as in the cloudy-charioted Apollo of Nicolo Poussin in our own Gallery, which the reader may oppose to the substantial Apollo, in Wilson's Niobe; and again in the phantom vignette of Turner already noticed; only such operations of the imagination are to be held of lower kind, and dangerous consequence if frequently trusted in; for those painters only

have the right imaginative power who can set the supernatural form before us, fleshed and boned like ourselves.*

17. Other abstractions occur, frequently, of things which have much accidental variety of form; as of waves, on Greek sculptures in successive volutes, and of clouds often in supporting volumes in the sacred pictures; but these I do not look upon as results of imagination at all, but mere signs and letters; and whenever a very highly imaginative mind touches them, it always realizes as far as may be. Even Titian is content to use, at the top of his S. Pietro Martire, the conventional, round, opaque cloud, which cuts his trees open like an axe; but Tintoret, in his picture of the Golden Calf, though compelled to represent the Sinai under conventional form, in order that the receiving of the tables might be seen at the top of it, yet so soon as it is possible to give

* Comp. Ch. V. § 4.

more truth, he takes a grand fold of horizontal cloud straight from the flanks of the Alps, and shows the forests of the mountains through its misty volume, like seaweed through deep sea.*

18. Nevertheless, when the realization is impossible, bold symbolism is of the highest value, and in religious art, as we shall presently see, even necessary, as of the rays of light in the Titian woodcut of St. Francis; and sometimes the attention is directed by some such strange form to the meaning of the image, which may be missed if it remains in its natural purity (as, I suppose, few, in looking at the Cephalus and Procris of Turner, note the sympathy of those faint rays that are just drawing back and dying between the trunks of the far-off forest, with the ebbing life of the nymph, unless, indeed, they happen to recollect

* All the clouds of Tintoret are sublime; the worst that know in art are Correggio's, especially in the Madonna della Scudella, and Duomo of Parma.

the same sympathy marked by Shelley in the Alastor); but the imagination is not shown in any such modifications; however, in some cases they may be valuable, and I note them merely in consequence of their peculiar use in religious art, presently to be examined.

19. The last mode we have here to note in which the Imagination regardant may be expressed in art is Exaggeration, of which, as it is the vice of all bad artists, and may be constantly resorted to without any warrant of imagination, it is necessary to note strictly the admissible limits.

In the first place a colossal statue is not necessarily any more an exaggeration of what it represents, than a miniature is a diminution; it need not be a representation of a giant, but a representation, on a large scale, of a man; only it is to be observed, that, as any plane intersecting the cone of rays between us and the object must receive an image smaller than

the object, a small image is rationally and completely expressive of a larger one; but not a large of a small one. Hence I think that all statues above the Elgin standard, or that of Michael Angelo's Night and Morning, are, in a measure, taken by the eye for representations of giants, and I think them always disagreeable. The amount of exaggeration admitted by Michael Angelo is valuable, because it separates the emblematic from the human form, and gives greater freedom to the grand lines of the frame; for notice of his scientific system of increase of size I may refer the reader to Sir Charles Bell's remarks on the statues of the Medici chapel. But there is one circumstance which Sir Charles has not noticed, and in the interpretation of which, therefore, it is likely I may be myself wrong, that the extremities are singularly small in proportion to the limbs; by which means there is an expression given of strength and

activity greater than in the ordinary human type: which appears to me to be an allowance for that alteration in proportion necessitated by increase of size, which has been spoken of in Chap. II. of the Second Section of Part II., § 10, note; not but that Michael Angelo always makes the extremities comparatively small, but smallest, comparatively, in his largest works: so I think, from the size of the head, it may be conjectured respecting the Theseus of the Elgins. Such adaptations are not necessary when the exaggerated image is spectral; for, as the laws of matter in that case can have no operation, we may expand the form as far as we choose, only let careful distinction be made between the size of the thing represented, and the scale of the representation. The canvas on which Sir T. Lawrence has stretched his Satan in the schools of the Royal Academy is a mere concession to inability. He might have made him look more gigantic in one of a foot square.

20. Another kind of Exaggeration is of things whose size is variable to a size or degree greater than that usual with them, as in waves and mountains; and there are hardly any limits to this exaggeration, so long as the laws which Nature observes in her increase be observed. Thus, for instance, the form and polished surface of a breaking ripple three inches high, are not representative of either the form or the surface of the surf of a storm, nodding ten feet above the beach; neither would the cutting ripple of a breeze upon a lake, if simply exaggerated, represent the forms of Atlantic surges: but as nature increases her bulk, she diminishes the angles of ascent, and increases her divisions; and if we would represent surges of size greater than ever existed, which it is lawful to do, we must carry out these operations to still greater extent. Thus Turner, in his picture of the Slave Ship, divides the whole sea into two masses of

enormous swell, and conceals the horizon by a gradual slope of only two or three degrees. This is intellectual exaggeration. In the Academy exhibition of 1843, there was, in one of the smaller rooms, a black picture of a storm, in which there appeared on the near sea, just about to be overwhelmed by a breaker curling right over it, an object at first sight liable to be taken for a walnut shell, but which, on close examination, proved to be a ship with mast and sail. This is childish exaggeration, because it is impossible, by the laws of matter and motion, that such a breaker should ever exist. Again, in mountains, we have repeatedly observed the necessary building up and multitudinous division of the higher peaks, and the smallness of the slopes by which they usually rise. We may, therefore, build up the mountain as high as we please, but we must do it in nature's way, and not in impossible peaks and precipices; not but that a daring feature

is admissible here and there, as the Matterhorn is admitted by nature; but we must not compose a picture out of such exceptions; we may use them, but they must be as exceptions exhibited. I shall have much to say, when we come to treat of the sublime, of the various modes of treating mountain form; so that at present I shall only point to an unfortunate instance of inexcusable and effectless exaggeration* in the distance of Turner's vignette to Milton (the Temptation on the Mountain),* and desire the reader to compare it with legitimate exaggeration, in his vignette to the second part of Jacqueline, in Rogers's poems.

21. Another kind of Exaggeration is necessary to retain the characteristic impressions of nature on reduced scale. It is not possible, for instance, to give the leafage of trees in its proper proportion, on a small scale, without

* (See, in Addenda, the note on my courtesies of criticism.)

entirely losing their grace of form and curvature; of this the best proof is found in the calotype or daguerreotype, which fail in foliage, not only because the green rays are ineffective, but because, on the small scale of the image, the reduced leaves lose their organization, and look like moss attached to sticks. In order to retain, therefore, their character of flexibility, the painter is often compelled to increase the proportionate size of the leaves, and to arrange them in generic masses. Of this treatment compare the grand examples throughout the Liber Studiorum. That it is by such means only that the ideal character of objects is to be preserved, has been observed in the second chapter of the Third Section of Part II. In all these cases exaggeration is only lawful as the sole means of arriving at truth of impression when strict fidelity is out of the question.

Other modes of Exaggeration there are, on

which I shall not at present farther insist, the proper place for their discussion being in treating of the sublime; and these which I have at present instanced are enough to establish the point at issue, respecting imaginative verity, inasmuch as we find that exaggeration itself, if imaginative, is referred to principles of truth, and of actual being.

22. We have now, I think, reviewed the various modes in which Imagination contemplative may be exhibited in art, and arrived at all necessary certainties respecting the essence of the faculty: which we have found in its three functions, Associative of Truth, Penetrative of Truth, and Contemplative of Truth; and having no dealings nor relations with any kind of falsity. One task, however, remains to us, namely, to observe the operation of the Theoretic and Imaginative faculties together, in the attempt at realization to the bodily sense of Beauty supernatural and Divine.

CHAPTER V.

Of the Superhuman Ideal.

1. IN our investigation, in the first Part, of the laws of beauty, we confined ourselves to the observation of lower nature, or of humanity. We were prevented from proceeding to deduce conclusions respecting Divine ideality by our not having then established any principles respecting the Imaginative faculty, by which, under the discipline of the Theoretic, such ideality is conceived. I had purposed to conclude the present Part by a careful examination of this subject; but as this is evidently foreign to the matter immediately under discussion, and involves questions of great intricacy respecting the development of mind among those Pagan nations who are

supposed to have produced high examples of spiritual ideality, I believe it will be better to delay such inquiries until we have concluded our detailed observation of the beauty of visible nature; and I shall therefore at present take notice only of one or two principles, which were referred to, or implied, in the chapter respecting the Human ideal, and without the enunciation of which that chapter might lead to false conclusions.

2. There are four ways in which Beings supernatural may be conceived as manifesting themselves to human sense. The first, by external types, signs, or influences; as God to Moses in the flames of the bush, and to Elijah in the voice of Horeb.

The second, by the assuming of a form not properly belonging to them; as the Holy Spirit of that of a Dove; the second person of the Trinity of that of a Lamb; and so such manifestations, under Angelic or other form, of the

first person of the Trinity, as seem to have been made to Abraham, Moses, and Ezekiel.

The third, by the manifestation of a form properly belonging to them, but not necessarily seen; as of the Risen Christ to His disciples when the doors were shut. And the fourth, by their operation on the human form which they influence or inspire; as in the shining of the face of Moses.

3. It is evident that in all these cases, wherever there is form at all, it is the form of some creature to us known. It is no new form peculiar to spirit, nor can it be. We can conceive of none. Our inquiry is simply therefore, by what modifications those creature forms to us known, as of a lamb, a bird, or a human creature, may be explained as signs or habitations of Divinity, or of angelic essence, and not creatures such as they seem.

4. This may be done in two ways. First, by effecting some change in the appearance of

the creature inconsistent with its actual nature; as by giving it colossal size, or unnatural colour or material, as of gold, or silver, or flame, instead of flesh; or taking away its property of matter altogether, and forming it of light or shade, or in an intermediate step, of cloud or vapour; or explaining it by terrible concomitant circumstances, as of wounds in the body, or strange lights and seemings round about it; or joining of two bodies together, as in angels' wings. Of all which means of attaining supernatural character (which, though in their nature ordinary and vulgar, are yet effective and very glorious in mighty hands) we have already seen the limits in speaking of the Imagination.

5. But the second means of obtaining supernatural character is that with which we are now concerned, namely, retaining the actual form in its full and material presence, and, without aid from any external interpretation

whatsoever, to raise that form by mere inherent dignity to such pitch of power and impressiveness as cannot but assert and stamp it for superhuman.

On the north side of the Campo Santo at Pisa, are a series of paintings from the Old Testament history by Benozzo Gozzoli. In the earlier of these, angelic presences, mingled with human, occur frequently, illustrated by no awfulness of light, nor incorporeal tracing. Clear revealed they move, in human forms, in the broad daylight and on the open earth, side by side, and hand in hand with men. But they never miss of the angel.

He who can do this, has reached the last pinnacle and utmost power of ideal, or any other art. He stands in no need, thenceforward, of cloud, or lightning, or tempest, or terror of mystery. His sublime is independent of the elements. It is of that which shall stand when they shall melt with fervent

heat, and light the firmament when the sun is as sackcloth of hair.

6. Let us consider by what means this has been effected, so far as they are by analysis traceable; and that is not far, for here, as always, we find that the greater part of what has been rightly accomplished has been done by faith and intense feeling, and cannot, by aid of any rules or teaching, be either tried, estimated, or imitated.

And first, of the expression of supernatural influence on forms actually human, as of Sibyl or Prophet. It is evident that not only here is it unnecessary, but we are not altogether at liberty to trust for expression to the utmost ennobling of the human form: for we cannot do more than this, when that form is to be the actual representation, and not the recipient of Divine Presence. Hence, in order to retain the actual humanity definitely, we must leave upon it such signs of the operation of Sin and

the liability to Death as are consistent with human ideality; and often more than these, definite signs of immediate and active evil, when the prophetic spirit is to be expressed in men such as were Saul and Balaam; neither may we ever, with just discrimination, touch the utmost limits of beauty in human form when inspiration only is to be expressed, and not angelic or Divine being; of which reserve and subjection the most instructive instances are found in the works of Angelico, who invariably uses inferior types for the features of humanity, even glorified (excepting always the Madonna), nor ever exerts its full power of beauty, either in feature or expression, except in angels, or in the Madonna, or in Christ. Now the expression of spiritual influence without supreme elevation of the bodily type we have seen to be a work of Penetrative imagination, and we found it accomplished by Michael Angelo; but I think by him only. I am aware

of no one else who, to my mind, has expressed the inspiration of Prophet or Sibyl; this, however, I affirm not, but shall leave to the determination of the reader, as the principles at present to be noted refer entirely to that elevation of the creature form necessary when it is actually representative of a Spiritual being.

7. I have affirmed, in the conclusion of the Third Section of Part II., that "of that which is more than Creature no Creature ever conceived." I think this almost self-evident, for it is clear that the illimitableness of Divine attributes cannot be by matter represented (though it may be typified); and I believe that all who are acquainted with the range of sacred art will admit, not only that no representation of Christ has ever been even partially successful, but that the greatest painters fall therein below their accustomed level; Perugino and Fra Angelico especially: Leonardo has, I think,

done best; but perhaps the beauty of the fragment left at Milan (for in spite of all that is said of repainting and destruction, that Cenacolo is still the finest in existence) is as much dependent on the very untraceableness resulting from injury as on its original perfection. Of more daring attempts at representation of Divinity we need not speak; only this is to be noted respecting them, that though by the ignorant Romanists many such efforts were made under the idea of actual representation (note the way in which Cellini speaks of the seal made for the Pope), by the nobler among them I suppose they were intended, and by us at any rate they may always be received, as mere symbols, the noblest that could be employed, but as much symbols still as a triangle, or the Alpha and Omega, nor do I think that the most scrupulous amongst Christians ought to desire to exchange the power obtained by the use of this symbol in Michael Angelo's

creation of Adam and of Eve, for the effect which would be produced by the substitution of any other sign in place of it. Of these efforts, then, we need reason no farther, but may limit ourselves to considering the purest modes of giving a conception of superhuman but still creature form, as of angels; in equal rank with whom, perhaps, we may without offence place the mother of Christ: at least, we must so regard the type of the Madonna in receiving it from Romanist painters.*

8. And first, much is to be done by right modification of accessory circumstances, so as to express miraculous power exercised over

* I take no note of the representation of *Evil* Spirits, since throughout we have been occupied in the pursuit of Beauty; but it may be observed generally, that there is great difficulty to be overcome in attempts of this kind, because the elevation of the form necessary to give it spirituality destroys the appearance of evil; hence even the greatest painters have been reduced to receive aid from the fancy, and to eke out all they could conceive of malignity by help of horns, hoofs, and claws. Giotto's Satan in

them by the Spiritual creature. There is a beautiful instance of this in John Bellini's picture of St. Jerome at Venice. The Saint sits upon a rock, his grand form defined against clear green open sky; he is reading; a noble tree springs out of a cleft in the rock, bends itself suddenly back to form a rest for the volume, then shoots up into the sky. There is something very beautiful in this obedient ministry of the lower creature; but be it observed that the sweet feeling of the whole depends upon the service being such as is consistent with its nature. It is not animated, it does not *listen* to the saint, nor bend itself

the Campo Santo, with the serpent gnawing the heart, is fine; so many of the fiends of Orcagna, and always those of Michael Angelo. Tintoret, in the Temptation, with his usual truth of invention, has represented the Evil Spirit under the form of a fair angel, the wings burning with crimson and silver, the face sensual and treacherous. It is instructive to compare the results of imagination associated with powerful fancy in the demons of these great painters or even in such nightmares as that of Salvator

towards him as if in affection; this would have been mere fancy, illegitimate and effectless. But the simple bend of the trunk to receive the book is miraculous subjection of the true nature of the tree; it is therefore imaginative, and very touching.

9. It is not often, however, that the religious painters even go this length: they content themselves usually with impressing on the landscape perfect symmetry and order, such as may seem consistent with, or induced by, the spiritual nature they would represent. All signs of decay, disturbance, and imperfection, are also banished; and in doing this it is

already spoken of (Part II. Sec. II. Chap. I. § 12, note), with the simple ugliness of idiotic distortion in the meaningless, terrorless monsters of Bronzino in the large picture of the Uffizii; where the painter, utterly uninventive, having assembled all that is abominable of hanging flesh, bony limbs, crane necks, staring eyes, and straggling hair, cannot yet, by the sum and substance of all, obtain as much real fearfulness as an imaginative painter could throw into the turn of a lip or the knitting of a brow.

evident that some unnaturalness and singularity must result, inasmuch as there are no veritable forms of landscape but express or imply a state of progression or of imperfection. All mountain forms are seen to be produced by convulsion and modelled by decay; the finer forms of clouds have threatenings in them of storm; all forest grouping is wrought out with varieties of strength and growth among its several members, and bears evidences of struggle with unkind influences. All such appearances are banished in the supernatural landscape; the trees grow straight, equally branched on each side, and of such slight and feathery frame as shows them never to have encountered blight, or frost, or tempest. The mountains stand up in fantastic pinnacles; there is on them no trace of torrent, no scathe of lightning; no fallen fragments encumber their foundations, no worn ravines divide their flanks; the seas are always waveless, the skies

always calm, crossed only by fair, horizontal, lightly wreathed, white clouds.

10. In some cases these conditions result partly from feeling, partly from ignorance of the facts of nature, or incapability of representing them, as in the first type of the treatment found in Giotto and his school; in others they are observed on principle, as by Benozzo Gozzoli, Perugino, and Raffaelle. There is a beautiful instance by the former in the frescoes of the Ricardi Palace, where, behind the adoring angel groups, the landscape is governed by the most absolute symmetry; roses, and pomegranates, their leaves drawn to the last rib and vein, twine themselves in fair and perfect order about delicate trellises; broad stone pines and tall cypresses overshadow them, bright birds hover here and there in the serene sky, and groups of angels, hand joined with hand, and wing with wing, glide and float through the glades of the unentangled forest.

But behind the human figures, behind the pomp and turbulence of the kingly procession descending from the distant hills, the spirit of the landscape is changed. Severer mountains rise in the distance, ruder prominences and less flowery vary the nearer ground, and gloomy shadows remain unbroken beneath the forest branches.

11. The landscape of Perugino, for grace, purity, and as much of nature as is consistent with the above-named conditions, is unrivalled; and the more interesting because in him, certainly, whatever limits are set to the rendering of nature proceed not from incapability. The sea is in the distance almost always, then some blue promontories and undulating dewy park ground, studded with glittering trees. In the landscape of the fresco in Sta. Maria Maddalena at Florence there is more variety than is usual with him: a gentle river winds round the bases of rocky hills, a

river like our own Wye or Tees in their loveliest reaches; level meadows stretch away on its opposite side; mounds set with slender-stemmed foliage occupy the nearer ground, and a small village with its simple spire peeps from the forest at the bend of the valley; it is remarkable that, in architecture thus employed, neither Perugino, nor any other of the ideal painters, ever use Italian forms, but always Transalpine, both of church and castle. The little landscape which forms the background of his own portrait in the Uffizii is another highly finished and characteristic example. The landscape of Raffaelle was learned from his father, and continued for some time little modified, though expressed with greater refinement. It became afterwards conventional and poor, and in some cases altogether meaningless. The haystacks and vulgar trees behind the St. Cecilia at Bologna form a painful contrast to the pure

space of mountain country in the Perugino opposite.*

12. In all these cases, while I would uphold the landscape thus employed and treated, as worthy of all admiration, I should be sorry to advance it for imitation. What is right in its mannerism arose from keen feeling in the painter: imitated without the same feeling it would be painful; the only safe mode of following in such steps is to attain perfect knowledge of Nature herself, and then to suffer our own feelings to guide us in the selection

* I have not thought it necessary to give farther instances at present, since I purpose hereafter to give numerous examples of this kind of ideal landscape. Of true and noble landscape, as such, I am aware of no instances except where least they might have been expected, among the sea-bred Venetians. Ghirlandajo shows keen, though prosaic, sense of nature in that view of Venice behind an Adoration of the Magi in the Uffizii, but he at last walled himself up among gilded entablatures. Masaccio indeed has given one grand example in the fresco of the Tribute Money; but its colour is now nearly lost.

of what is fitting for any particular purpose. Every painter ought to paint what he himself loves, not what others have loved; if his mind be pure and sweetly toned, what he loves will be lovely; if otherwise, no example can guide his selection, no precept govern his hand; and farther, let it be distinctly observed, that all this mannered landscape is only right under the supposition of its being a background to some supernatural presence; behind mortal beings it would be wrong, and by itself, as landscape, ridiculous; and farther, the chief virtue of it results from the exquisite refinement of those natural details consistent with its character; from the botanical drawing of the flowers, and the clearness and brightness of the sky.

13. Another mode of obtaining supernatural character is by purity of colour almost shadowless, no more darkness being allowed than is absolutely necessary for the explanation of the

forms and the vividness of the effect, enhanced, as far as may be, by use of gilding, enamel, and other jewellery. I think the smaller works of Angelico are perfect models in this respect; the glories about the heads being of beaten rays of gold, on which the light plays and changes as the spectator moves (and which therefore throw the purest flesh colour out in dark relief); and such colour and light being obtained by the enamelling of the angel wings as, of course, is utterly unattainable by any other expedient of art; the colours of the draperies always pure and pale, blue, rose, or tender green, or brown, but never dark or gloomy; the faces of the most celestial fairness, brightly flushed; the height and glow of this flush are noticed by Constantin as reserved by the older painters for spiritual beings, as if expressive of light seen through the body.

I cannot think it necessary, while I insist

on the value of all these seemingly childish means when in the hands of a noble painter, to assert also their futility, and even absurdity, if employed by no exalted power. I think the error has commonly been on the side of scorn, and that we reject much in our foolish vanity, which, if wiser and more earnest, we should delight in. But two points it is very necessary to note in the use of such accessories.

14. The first, that the ornaments used by Angelico, Giotto, and Perugino, but especially by Angelico, are always of a *generic* and *abstract* character. They are not diamonds, nor brocades, nor velvets, nor gold embroideries; they are mere spots of gold or of colour, simple patterns upon *textureless* draperies; the angel wings burn with transparent crimson and purple and amber, but they are not set forth with peacock's plumes; the golden circlets gleam with changeful light, but they are not beaded with pearls, nor set with sapphires.

In the works of Filippino Lippi, Mantegna, and many other painters following, interesting examples may be found of the opposite treatment; and as in Lippi the heads are usually very sweet, and the composition severe, the degrading effect of the realized decorations and imitated dress may be seen in him simply, and without any addition of painfulness from other deficiencies of feeling. The larger of the two pictures in the Tuscan room of the Uffizii, but for this defect, would have been a very noble ideal work.

15. The second point to be observed is that brightness of colour is altogether inadmissible without purity and harmony; and that the sacred painters must not be followed in their frankness of unshadowed colour, unless we can also follow them in its clearness. As far as I am acquainted with the modern schools of Germany, they seem to be entirely ignorant of the value of colour as an assistant of

feeling, and to think that hardness, dryness, and opacity are its virtues as employed in religious art; whereas I hesitate not to affirm that in such art, more than in any other, clearness, luminousness, and intensity of hue are essential to right impression; and from the walls of the Arena chapel in their rainbow play of brilliant harmonies, to the solemn purple tones of Perugino's fresco in the Albizzi Palace, I know not any great work of sacred art which is not as precious in colour as in all other qualities (unless indeed it be a Crucifixion of Fra Angelico in the Florence Academy, which has just been glazed, and pumiced, and painted, and varnished by the picture cleaners until it glares from one end of the gallery to the other); only the pure white light and delicate hue of the idealists, whose colours are by preference such as we have seen to be the most beautiful in the chapter on Purity (Part II.), are carefully to be distinguished from the golden

light and deep-pitched hue of the school of Titian, whose virtue is the grandeur of earthly solemnity, not the glory of heavenly rejoicing.

16. But leaving these accessory circumstances, and touching the treatment of the bodily form, it is evident, in the first place, that whatever typical beauty the human body is capable of possessing must be bestowed upon it when it is to be understood as spiritual. And therefore those general proportions and types which are deducible from comparison of the nobler individuals of the race, must be adopted and adhered to; admitting among them not, as in the human ideal, such varieties as result from past suffering, or contest with sin, but such only as are consistent with sinless nature, or are the signs of instantly or continually operative affections; for though it is conceivable that spirit should suffer, it is inconceivable that spiritual frame should

retain, like the stamped inelastic human clay, the brand of sorrow past, unless fallen:

> "His face
> Deep scars of thunder had intrenched, and care
> Sat on his faded cheek."

Yet so far forth the Angelic idea is diminished, nor could this be suffered in pictorial representation.

17. Again, such muscular development as is necessary to the perfect beauty of the body is to be rendered. But that which is necessary to strength, or which appears to have been the result of laborious exercise, is inadmissible. No herculean form is spiritual, for it is degrading the spiritual creature to suppose it operative through impulse of bone and sinew; its power is immaterial and constant, neither dependent on, nor developed by, exertion. Generally it is well to conceal anatomical development as far as may be; even Michael Angelo's anatomy interferes with his divinity;

in the hands of lower men the angel becomes a preparation. How far it is possible to subdue or generalize the naked form I venture not to affirm; but I believe that it is best to conceal it, as far as may be, not with light and undulating draperies, that fall in with and exhibit its principal lines, but with severe and linear draperies, such as were constantly employed before the time of Raffaelle. I recollect no single instance of a naked angel that does not look boylike or childlike, and unspiritualized; even Fra Bartolomeo's might with advantage be spared from the pictures at Lucca; and, afterwards, the sky is merely encumbered with sprawling infants; those of Domenichino in the Madonna del Rosario, and Martyrdom of St. Agnes, are peculiarly offensive, studies of bare-legged children howling and kicking in volumes of smoke. Confusion seems to exist in the minds of subsequent painters between angels and Cupids.

18. Farther, the quantities of symmetry and repose are of peculiar value in spiritual form. We find the former most earnestly sought by all the great painters in the arrangement of the hair, wherein no loosely flowing nor varied form is admitted, but all restrained and undisturbed and equal ringlets; often, as in the infant Christ of Fra Angelico, supported on the forehead in forms of sculpturesque severity. The angel of Masaccio, in the Deliverance of Peter, grand both in countenance and motion, loses much of his spirituality because the painter has put a little too much of his own character into the hair, and left it disordered.

19. Of repose and its exalting power, I have already said enough for our present purpose, though I have not insisted on the peculiar manifestation of it in the Christian ideal as opposed to the Pagan. But this, as well as all other questions relating to the particular

development of the Greek mind, is foreign to the immediate inquiry, which therefore I shall here conclude, in the hope of resuming it in detail after examining the laws of beauty in the inanimate creation, always, however, holding this for certain, that of whatever kind or degree the shortcoming may be, it is not possible but that shortcoming should be visible in every Pagan conception, when set beside Christian; and believing, for my own part, that there is not only deficiency, but such difference in kind as must make all Greek conception full of danger to the student in proportion to his admiration of it; as I think has been fatally seen in its effects on the Italian schools, when its pernicious element first mingled with their solemn purity, and recently in its influence on the French historical painters; neither can I, from my present knowledge, fix upon an ancient statue which expresses by the countenance any one elevated

character of soul, or any single enthusiastic self-abandoning affection, much less any such majesty of feeling as might mark the features for supernatural.

20. The Greek could not conceive a spirit; he could do nothing without limbs; his God is a finite God, talking, pursuing, and going journeys; * if at any time he was touched with a true feeling of the unseen powers around him, it was in the field of poised battle; for there is something in the near coming of the shadow of death, something in the devoted fulfilment of mortal duty, that reveals the real God, though darkly. That pause on the field of Platæa was not one of vain superstition; the two white figures that blazed along the

* I know not anything in the range of art more unspiritual than the Apollo Belvedere; the raising of the fingers of the right hand in surprise at the truth of the arrow is altogether human, and would be vulgar in a prince, much more in a deity. The sandals destroy the divinity of the foot and the lip is curled with mortal passion.

Delphic plain, when the earthquake and the fire led the charge from Olympus, were more than sunbeams on the battle dust; the sacred cloud, with its lance light and triumph singing, that went down to brood over the masts of Salamis, was more than morning mist among the olives; and yet what were the Greek's thoughts of his God of Battle! No spirit power was in the vision:* it was a being of clay strength, and human passion, foul, fierce, and changeful: of penetrable arms and vulnerable flesh. Gather what we may of great from Pagan chisel or Pagan dream, and set it beside the orderer of Christian warfare, Michael the Archangel: not Milton's "with hostile brow and visage all inflamed;" not even Milton's in kingly treading of the hills of Paradise; not Raffaelle's with the expanded wings and

* (This sentence of course refers to Mars, not Pallas. The false bias of the general statement is enough corrected in the "Queen of the Air.")

brandished spear: but Perugino's; with his triple crest of traceless plume unshaken in heaven, his hand fallen on his crossleted sword, the truth girdle binding his undinted armour; God has put His power upon him, resistless radiance is on his limbs; no lines are there of earthly strength, no trace on the divine features of earthly anger; trustful, and thoughtful, fearless, but full of love, incapable except of the repose of eternal conquest, vessel and instrument of Omnipotence, filled like a cloud with the victor light, the dust of principalities and powers beneath his feet, the murmur of hell against him heard by his spiritual ear like the winding of a shell on the far-off sea shore.

21. It is vain to attempt to pursue the comparison; the two orders of art have in them nothing common, and the field of sacred history, the intent and scope of Christian feeling, are too wide and exalted to admit of

the juxtaposition of any other sphere or order of conception; they embrace all other fields like the dome of heaven. With what comparison shall we compare the types of the martyr saints;* the St. Stephen of Fra Bartolomeo, with his calm forehead crowned by the stony diadem, or the St. Catherine of Raffaelle looking up to heaven in the dawn of the eternal day, with her lips parted in the resting from her pain; or with what the Madonnas of Francia and Pinturicchio, in whom the hues

* (I will put no depreciatory comments under the honest canticle with which a book I was so happy in writing is brought to a close; though I have long ceased to care for the Madonnas of Francia, and much prefer the St. Catherine of Luini to that of Raffaelle, and feel the whole passage to read more like a piece of Mrs. Jameson than of me. Perhaps I am none the better, if the wiser, in these changes of temperament: but they enable me, at all events, fully to ratify the useful censures in the following Addenda, given with the second edition of the old book, and which I conclude my editorial duty by commenting upon, at some length, in the 'Epilogue.')

of the morning and the solemnity of eve, the gladness in accomplished promise, and sorrow of the sword-pierced heart, are gathered into one human Lamp of ineffable love? or with what the angel choirs of Angelico, with the flames on their white foreheads waving brighter as they move, and the sparkles streaming from their purple wings like the glitter of many suns upon a sounding sea, listening in the pauses of alternate song, for the prolonging of the trumpet blast, and the answering of psaltery and cymbal, throughout the endless deep, and from all the star shores of heaven?

ADDENDA.

ALTHOUGH the plan of the present portion of this work does not admit of particular criticism, it will neither be useless nor irrelevant to refer to one or two works, lately before the public, in the Exhibitions of the Royal Academy, which either illustrate, or present exceptions to, any of the preceding statements. I would first mention, with reference to what has been advanced respecting the functions of Associative Imagination, the very important work of Mr. Linnell, the "Eve of the Deluge;" a picture upheld by its admirers (and these were some of the most intelligent judges of the day) for a work of consummate imaginative power; while it was pronounced by the

public journals to be "a chaos of unconcocted colour."* If the writers for the press had been aware of the kind of study pursued by Mr. Linnell through many laborious years, characterised by an observance of nature scrupulously and minutely patient, directed by the deepest sensibility, and aided by a power of drawing almost too refined for landscape subjects, and only to be understood by reference to his engravings after Michael Angelo, they would have felt it to be unlikely that the work of such a man should be entirely undeserving of respect. On the other hand, the grounds of its praise were unfortunately chosen; for, though possessing many merits, it had no claim whatever to be ranked among productions of Creative art. It would perhaps be difficult to point to a work so exalted in feeling, and so

* (The usual style of journalist criticism in those days on any picture which had true colour in it at all. Neither Turner, nor Linnell, however, entrusted their fame to legal advocacy or defence.)

deficient in invention. The sky had been strictly taken from nature, this was evident at a glance; and as a study of sky it was every way noble. To the purpose of the picture it hardly contributed; its sublimity was that of splendour, not of terror; and its darkness that of retreating, not of gathering, storm. The features of the landscape were devoid alike of variety and probability; the division of the scene by the central valley and winding river at once theatrical and commonplace; and the foreground on which the light was intense, alike devoid of dignity in arrangement, and of interest in detail.*

The falseness, or deficiency, of colour in the works of Mr. Landseer has been remarked above, p. 155. The writer has much pleasure in noticing a very beautiful exception in the picture

* (The literary student will recognise the change of style in these notes, and the imitation of Johnson instead of Hooker. Johnson had been a much earlier model to me, and a far better and healthier tutor.)

of the "Random Shot," certainly the most successful rendering he has ever seen of the hue of snow under warm but subdued light. The subtlety of gradation from the portions of the wreath fully illumined, to those which, feebly tinged by the horizontal rays, swell into a dome of dim purple, dark against the green evening sky; the truth of the blue shadows, with which this dome was barred, and the depth of delicate colour out of which the lights upon the footprints were raised, deserved the most earnest and serious admiration, proving, at the same time, that the errors in colour, so frequently to be regretted in the works of the painter, are the result rather of inattention than of feeble perception. A curious proof of this inattention occurs in the disposition of the shadows in the background of the "Old Cover Hack," No. 229. One of its points of light is on the rusty iron handle of a pump, in the shape of an S. The sun strikes the greater

part of its length, illuminating the perpendicular portion of the curve; yet shadow is only cast on the wall behind by the returning portion of the lower extremity. A smile may be excited by the notice of so trivial a circumstance; but the simplicity of the error renders it the more remarkable, and the great masters of chiaroscuro are accurate in all such minor points; a vague sense of greater truth results from this correctness, even when it is not in particulars analyzed or noted by the observer. In the small but very valuable Paul Potter in Lord Westminster's collection, the body of one of the sheep under the hedge is for the most part in shadow, but the sunlight touches the extremity of the back. The sun is low, and the shadows feeble and distorted; yet that of the sunlighted fleece is cast exactly in its true place and proportion beyond that of the hedge. The spectator may not observe this; yet, unobserved, it is one of

the circumstances which make him feel the picture to be full of sunshine.*

As an example of perfect colour, and of the most refined handling ever perhaps exhibited in animal painting, the Butcher's Dog in the corner of Mr. Mulready's "Butt," No. 160, deserved a whole room of the Academy to himself. This, with the spaniel in the "Choosing the Wedding Gown," and the two dogs in the hayfield subject (Burchell and Sophia), display perhaps the most wonderful, because the most dignified, finish in the expression of anatomy and covering—of muscle and hide at once,† and assuredly the most perfect unity of drawing and colour, which the entire range of

* (I beg the reader to observe that I *could* be just even to the Dutch school !)

† (I forget these dogs now: but if they showed their muscles under their hide, they had no business to, and I should greatly prefer, now, Punch's Skye terrier, with the street boys disputing over him which end was his head, and which his tail.)

ancient and modern art can exhibit. Albert Durer is indeed the only rival who might be suggested; and, though greater far in imagination, and equal in draughtsmanship, Albert Durer was less true and less delicate in hue. In sculpturesque arrangement, both masters show the same degree of feeling: any of these dogs of Mulready might be taken out of the canvas and cut in alabaster, or, perhaps better, struck upon a coin. Every lock and line of the hair has been grouped as it is on a Greek die; and if this not always without some loss of ease and of action, yet this very loss is ennobling, in a period when all is generally sacrificed to the great coxcombry of art, the affectation of ease.

Yet Mr. Mulready himself is not always free from affectation of some kind; mannerism, at least, there is in his treatment of tree trunks. There is a ghastliness about his laboured anatomies of them, as well as a want of specific

character. Why need they be always flayed?* The hide of a beech tree, or of a birch or fir, is nearly as fair a thing as an animal's; glossy as a dove's neck, barred with black like a zebra, or glowing in purple grey and velvet brown like furry cattle in sunset. Why not paint these as Mr. Mulready paints other things, as they are? that simplest, that deepest of all secrets, which gives such majesty to the ragged leaves about the edges of the pond in the "Gravel-pit" (No. 125), and imparts a strange interest to the grey ragged urchins disappearing behind the bank, that bank so low, so familiar, so sublime! What a contrast between the deep sentiment of that commonest of all common, homeliest of all homely, subjects, and the lost sentiment of Mr. Stanfield's

* (Very properly asked. Compare 'Tale of a Tub,' Section IX., which settled the question as early as 1704. But modern scientific artists wouldn't draw the prophet Isaiah, if they could help it, till they had got him sawn asunder.)

"Amalfi," the chief landscape of the year, full of exalted material, and mighty crags, and massy seas, grottoes, precipices, and convents, fortress-towers and cloud-capped mountains, and all in vain, merely because that same simple secret has been despised; because nothing there is painted as it is! The picture was a most singular example of the scenic assemblage of contradictory theme which is characteristic of Picturesque, as opposed to Poetical, composition. The lines chosen from Rogers for a titular legend were full of summer, glowing with golden light, and toned with quiet melancholy:

> "To him who sails
> Under the shore, a few white villages,
> Scattered above, below, some in the clouds,
> Some on the margin of the dark blue sea,
> And glittering thro' their lemon groves, announce
> The region of Amalfi. Then, half-fallen,
> A lonely watch-tower on the precipice,
> Their ancient landmark, comes—long may it last!

> And to the seaman, in a distant age,
> Though now he little thinks how large his debt,
> Serve for their monument.'

Prepared by these lines for a dream upon deep calm waters, under the shadow and scent of the close lemon leaves, the spectator found himself placed by the painter, wet through, in a noisy fishing boat, on a splashing sea, with just as much on his hands as he could manage to keep her gunwale from being stove in against a black rock; and with a heavy grey squall to windward. (This squall, by-the-bye, was the very same which appeared in the picture of the Magra of 1847, and so were the snowy mountains above; only the squall at Amalfi entered on the left, and at the Magra on the right.) Now the scenery of Amalfi is impressive alike in storm or calm, and the writer has seen the Mediterranean as majestic and as southern-looking in its rage as in its rest. But it is treating both the green water and woods

unfairly, to destroy their peace without expressing their power; and withdraw from them their sadness and their sun, without the substitution of any effect more terrific than that of a squall at the Nore. The snow on the distant mountains chilled what it could not elevate, and was untrue to the scene besides; there is no snow on the Monte St. Angelo in summer except what is kept for the Neapolitan confectioners. The great merit of the picture was its rock-painting; too good to have required the aid of the exaggeration of forms which satiated the eye throughout the composition.

Mr. F. R. Pickersgill's "Contest of Beauty" (No. 515), and Mr. Uwins's "Vineyard Scene in the South of France," were, after Mr. Mulready's works, among the most interesting pieces of colour in the Exhibition. The former very rich and sweet in its harmonies, and especially happy in its contrasts of light and

dark armour; nor less in the fancy of the little Love who, losing his hold of the orange boughs, was falling ignominiously, without having time to open his wings. The latter was a curious example of what I have described as abstraction of colour. Strictly true or possible it was not; a vintage is usually a dusty and dim-looking procedure;* but there were poetry and feeling in Mr. Uwins's idealization of the sombre black of the veritable grape into a luscious ultra-marine purple, glowing among the green leaves like so much painted glass. The figures were bright and graceful in the extreme, and most happily grouped. Little

* (Nonsense. I had never seen a vintage except in the Pays de Vaud, or Burgundy, when I had been impressed by the quantity of white dust on the bunches close to the ground.

It is a curious proof to me, of the incalculable advance in the standard of painting since these notes were written, that I could find then no better pictures to praise in the whole Academy exhibition, than those here noticed.)

else that could be called colour was to be seen upon the walls of the Exhibition, with the exception of the smaller works of Mr. Etty. Of these, the single head, "Morning Prayer" (No. 25), and the "Still Life" (No. 73), deserved, allowing for their peculiar aim, the highest praise. The larger subjects, more especially the St. John, were wanting in the merits peculiar to the painter; and in other respects it is alike painful and useless to allude to them. A very important and valuable work of Mr. Harding was placed, as usual, where its merits could be but ill seen, and where its chief fault, a feebleness of colour in the principal light on the distant hills, was apparent. It was one of the very few views of the year which were transcripts, nearly without exaggeration, of the features of the localities.*

Among the less conspicuous landscapes,

* (See general notice of Mr. Harding's work in the Epilogue.)

Mr. W. E. Dighton's "Hay-Meadow Corner" deserved especial notice; it was at once vigorous, fresh, faithful, and unpretending; the management of the distance most ingenious, and the painting of the foreground, with the single exception of Mr. Mulready's above noticed, unquestionably the best in the room. I have before had occasion to notice a picture by this artist, "A Hayfield in a Shower," exhibited in the British Institution in 1847, and this year (1848) in the Scottish Academy, whose sky, in qualities of rainy, shattered, transparent grey, I have seldom seen equalled; nor the mist of its distance, expressive alike of previous heat and present beat of rain. I look with much interest for other works by this painter.

A hurried visit to Scotland in the spring of this year, while it enables the writer to acknowledge the ardour and genius manifested in very many of the works exhibited in the

Scottish Academy, cannot be considered as furnishing him with sufficient grounds for specific criticism. He cannot, however, err in testifying his concurrence in the opinion expressed to him by several of the most distinguished members of that Academy, respecting the singular merit of the works of Mr. H. Drummond. A cabinet picture of "Banditti on the Watch" appeared to him one of the most masterly, unaffected, and sterling pieces of quiet painting he has ever seen from the hand of a living artist; and the other works of Mr. Drummond were alike remarkable for their manly and earnest finish, and their sweetness of feeling.

EPILOGUE.

THE above short pieces of criticism on contemporary art, given, I believe, only in the second edition of 'Modern Painters,' have become now extremely curious to myself, in connection with points of my personal history, of which some account may perhaps lead to a more indulgent retrospect of this book; and further illustrate others written at or near this time, as well as some of my drawings and manuscripts which may be thought worth preservation hereafter.

1841. I must first set down a few fastening dates. In the winter of 1840, and spring of 1841, I was at Rome, Naples, and Venice, making a series of pencil sketches, partly in

imitation of Prout, partly of David Roberts. I had not the smallest notion of *writing* about art at that time, (many people, myself included, thought I was dying, and should never write about anything). These sketches, though full of weaknesses and vulgarities, have also much good in them ; two are placed at Oxford as records of Venice, of which one was used to paint from by Prout himself; and all of them are of historical interest in their accuracy of representation. Sketching only in this way from nature, I was trying to make water-colour drawings and vignettes in imitation of Turner; which were extremely absurd and weak.

1842. In the spring of this year, I made, by mere accident, my first drawing of leafage in natural growth—a few ivy leaves round a stump in the hedge of the Norwood road, under Tulse Hill: there is a brick-built terrace of fashionable dwelling-houses now, where the

hedge used to be. I never (in my drawings, however much in my writings) *imitated* anybody any more after that one sketch was made; but entered at once on the course of study which enabled me afterwards to understand Pre-Raphaelitism.

Few drawings, however, made in that year, now remain in my possession. A book of plant studies, given to Mr. C. E. Norton, represents the usual manner of them very perfectly. One or two studies of light and shade, and a few of trees, I still possess, and may have occasion to engrave.

In the same spring, Turner first showed his Swiss sketches, and offered to realize ten of them. The Splugen drawing, of which the story is told at page 74 of my Turner notes,* and which was bought for me by my friends on my recovery from illness in 1878, was made at that time, and shown with the sketches. My

* Published by the Fine Art Society, 1878.

admiration of it afterwards directed mainly all my mountain-studies * and geological researches. I obtained in the same year the drawings of Coblentz and Lucerne town, which directed me into new lines of thought with respect to colour; so that it was a kind of birth-year to me, in all ways at once. In its autumn I was again on the Continent—chiefly at Chamouni;—then, returning in the full enthusiasm, and rush of sap in the too literally sapling and stripling mind of me, wrote the first volume of 'Modern Painters.'

Next year (1843) Turner painted for me the Goldau and Dazio Grande; drawings which have become to me, now, very curious symbols of his life, and of mine.

In 1844 I went back to Chamouni, and worked in entirely right and profitable ways. A drawing of Mont Blanc with the aiguilles

* Not into imitation of the drawing itself, but to investigation of the mountain forms which it illustrated.

(Charmoz to Midi), from above Les Tines, mostly pencil, on dark grey, but with a piece of rock coloured in the foreground,* represents my power at this time sufficiently.

In 1845, the first volume of 'Modern Painters' having already begun to make its mark, I thought it necessary to look more carefully at some of the pictures at Florence and Venice before proceeding with the essay. My father could not spare time to go with me; so he asked me to take my Chamouni guide, Joseph Couttet, by way of pro-papa. He was a tutor, and domestic Pope's legate, of perfect fidelity and good sense: a good practical physician also; I never had occasion to call in any other; and he always after that time travelled with me when my father and mother could not, (my mother never left my father,) until Couttet's death in 1875. He was nearly fifty when, in 1845, he met me at Geneva in

* Now in the possession of Mrs. John Simon.

early April; and we travelled leisurely through Lower Savoy and Provence to Frejus. It was starlight, after a long day's drive, as we came down towards the sea over the southern moors of wild myrtle; and I recollect teasing old Joseph considerably by humming "com' e gentil" all the way.

From Frejus we went along the two Rivieras, *slowly*, always. There must be a drawing of Albenga somewhere—I have lost it—made then; now of some importance as an historical document of the glorious old town. A study of stone pine, at Sestri, is placed in my school at Oxford.

The road usually taken, at that time, by travellers entering Italy from the Riviera, left the coast at Massa to avoid the Pisan Maremma, and passed through the southern valleys of the Carrara hills to Lucca.

Where, with all my new knowledge and freshness of acceptancy I found, as if never

seen before, the inlaid architecture of San Michele,—Fra Bartolomeo's picture of the Magdalen, with St. Catherine of Siena, (then in the church of San Romano, now in the Academy of Lucca),—and the statue, by Quercia, of Ilaria di Caretto.

The inlaying of San Michele, as opposed to Gothic *pierced* lace-work, (which was all I cared for in Gothic at that time,) and the pure and severe arcades of finely proportioned columns at San Frediano, doing stern duty under vertical walls, as opposed to Gothic shafts with no end, and buttresses with no bearing,* struck me dumb with admiration and amazement; and then and there on the instant, I began, in the nave of San Frediano,

* As in any small English late Gothic towers, and our modern British imitations of them caricatured by me afterwards in Plate VI. of the first volume of the 'Stones of Venice,' by placing the elevation of one of the towers of the college at Edinburgh beside that of the campanile

the course of architectural study which reduced under accurate law the vague enthusiasm of my childish taste, and has been ever since a method with me, guardian of all my other work in natural and moral philosophy.

Fra Bartolomeo's Magdalen was the first example of accomplished sacred art I had seen, since my initiation, by the later Turner drawings, into the truths of deep colour and tone.

of St. Mark's. The college tower is not kindly represented; the St. Mark's also, unintentionally, maligned; for no photography existed at that period, and my own careless sketch omitted the entasis of the tower. But the piece of the text, explaining the points of opposition alluded to above, is worth quoting. "The Venetian tower rises 350 feet, and has no buttresses, though built of brick; the British tower rises 121 feet, and is built of stone, but is supposed to be incapable of standing without two huge buttresses on each angle. The St. Mark's tower has a high sloping roof, but carries it simply, requiring no pinnacles at its angles; the British tower has no visible roof, but has four pinnacles for ornament." ('Stones of Venice,' vol. i., p. 201.)

It is a picture of no original power (none of Fra Bartolomeo's are), but it sums the principles of great Italian religious art in its finest period,—serenely luminous sky,—full light on the faces; local colour the dominant power over a chiaroscuro more perfect because subordinate; absolute serenity of emotion and gesture; and rigid symmetry in composition. These technical principles, never to be forgotten, (and leaving very few to be added,) that single picture taught me in the course of a day's work upon it; and remains accordingly, without being the subject of special admiration, extremely dear to me.

The statue of Ilaria became at once, and has ever since remained, my ideal of Christian sculpture. It is, I will venture to say, after these forty years of further study, the most beautiful extant marble work of the Middle Ages,—faultless, as far as human skill and feeling can or may be so. And beside it, I

partly then felt, partly vowed, that my life must no more be spent only in the study of rocks and clouds.

The lesson was presently to be driven home. Arriving next at Pisa, and finding the system of twelfth century shaft and mosaic architecture typically represented there, I settled down instantly to work on the Duomo and Baptistery, little thinking, or caring, what the low building was beyond them, across the field.

I had scarcely read a word, then, of Italian history. Knew, of the Gulf of Spezzia, only that Shelley had been drowned in it; and little more of Pisa than that Byron had lived in it. Of Dante I had never read a line, except the story of Ugolino. And of Christian art, but for the volumes of Lord Lindsay in my portmanteau, should have known nothing whatsoever.

But, though I knew nothing of Christian art, I knew much of the theory, and something

of the truth, of Christianity. Account is given in 'Fors,' Letters XLII. and LIII., of the way my mother trained me in the Bible, and in the Puritan faith; something also has been told of the way my Scottish aunt showed me its beauty. My own faults or follies only heightened my respect for the virtue and simplicity of the Scottish border race, as I then had known it; nor did either Byron or Shelley for an instant disturb my belief in John Bunyan, or my trust in the presence of an aiding God, in this world, and in the justice of His judgments in that to come. What formal obedience to my parents, and steady carrying out of my mother's way of reading, did for me, as farther safeguards, I cannot estimate; but the steady reading of a chapter of the Bible in the morning and evening, and at least the deliberate *utterance* of appointed prayer, with endeavour to fix my thoughts upon it, (often successful—and always sincere,) gave me a

continually increasing knowledge of the meaning both of the Old and New Testaments, and of what prayer meant for Christians of old time; farther than this, all my love of the beauty, or sense of the majesty, of natural things were in direct ratio to conditions of devotional feeling; and I never climbed any mountain, alone, without kneeling down, by instinct, on its summit, to pray. In this temper of mind, which also in that particular year was at once gloomy with penitence and ardent in purpose, the Campo Santo of Pisa was to me a very Palestine. Benozzo's angels of Life, and Orcagna's of Death, were at once living presences to me, and I began before the fresco, then attributed to Giotto, of the sacrifice of Job, the series of religious studies which led me steadily forward to those of the life of Moses in the Sistine Chapel, thirty years afterwards.

The drawings which I made at that time

in the Campo Santo, of the Sacrifice of Job; the three angels with Abraham; the three beggars praying to Death; and the conversion of St. Ranieri, are fortunately still in my possession. That of the small Madonna by Angelico, then in the sacristy of Sta. Maria Novella at Florence, was engraved as the frontispiece to the fifth volume of 'Modern Painters,' and the engraving (by Mr. Holl) gives a perfect rendering of my power and manner at that time. The original drawing was given away, but I am thankful to be able to place in my school at Oxford that of the Sacrifice of Job.

Very solemnly I wish it had been my fate to follow out such a series of outline drawings, from the now lost frescoes of Italy; but I had come to Italy for a given purpose:—nobody wanted, or cared for, outlines from the Campo Santo; and, only making these few memoranda for my own instruction, I went on

with the work necessary for the second volume of 'Modern Painters.'

I had been obliged, in order to obtain permission to draw in the Campo Santo, to present myself to the Abbé Rosini, then the Professor of the Belli Arti in Pisa. He was a quite zealous and honest Professor, very accessible, kind, and talkative. As, of course, he had never heard the name of any artist in England, I took with me one day when I went to call, the two Liber plates of Cephalus, and the Grande Chartreuse. But the Professor happened that afternoon to be very eager that I should come to hear his own lecture "del bello," and he threw the Turner engravings contemptuously aside, with a "Yes —yes. I see,—e un imitatore di Salvator,— we have plenty such." I went to the lecture, nevertheless; and heard with the rest of the students, as I had more than once heard before, how Apelles painted a perfect girl by putting the head of one on the shoulders of another,

and the legs of a third; and how the inimitable Raphael painted from the exquisite ideal in his divine mind: and came away with a complacent conviction that I knew a good deal more about the 'Bello' than the Abbé Rosini.

In this impression I was certainly right: but the circumstance was extremely unfortunate, in adding to the conceit, and sense of self-importance, which were already much too intimately colouring and stimulating the zeal with which I pursued my new discoveries.

These presently became more absorbing in themselves. From Pisa I went to Florence, and fortunately got lodgings in the south-east angle of the square of the Duomo, looking straight on Giotto's tower, with the south transept and dome beyond; so that for two months, I had it to look at by daylight and moonlight. The Dominicans at Santa Maria Novella had still their spice garden; I made hay, that June, with the Franciscans, in their orchard at the

"top of Fesolé," and San Miniato, the loveliest of lovely ruins, was yet encircled by a wilderness of wild rose. It was still possible, in these quiet places, to conceive what Florence had been, in the year of Victories.

My main work, for those two months, was in the apse of Santa Maria Novella, on Ghirlandajo; in the Brancacci chapel on Masaccio and Lippi; and in St. Mark's convent, on Angelico. And very solemnly I wish that I had gone straight home that summer—and never seen Venice,* or Tintoret! Perhaps I might have been the Catholic Archbishop of York, by this time—who knows! building my cathedral there, in emulation of the cardinal's at Westminster—instead of a tiny Sheffield museum.

Fate, and the unlucky task of book-writing,

* Seen her, that is to say, with man's eyes. My boyhood's first sight of her, when I was fourteen, could not have been brighter, and would not have been forgotten.

ordered otherwise. For 'Modern Painters' could not be finished with a study of ecclesiastical history; and, as the stress of summer came on in Florence, having gained some initiatory conception of her art, with the nature that taught it, and learned to love even the yellow sand of Arno scarcely less than the white sand of Arve, I went north to my special work again, and spent the early autumn, nearly alone, in Val Anzasca. There was little more than a chalet for inn, at Macugnaga in those days.

In September, Mr. J. D. Harding, who, after Copley Fielding, had been my master in water-colour, wrote to ask if he could join me in his autumn tour. I went down to meet him at Baveno; and thence we drove quietly in an open carriage by Como and the spurs of the Italian Alps to Venice, walking up all the hills, stopping at all the river sides, sleeping a night or two at Como, Bergamo, Brescia,

and Padua,—with a week at Verona. A most happy time, for me; and I believe for us both.

Harding had vivid, healthy, and unerring artistic faculty, but no depth of science, and scarcely any sentiment. I saw him once impressed by the desolation of the great hall of the Casa Foscari; but in general, if the forms of the subject were picturesque, it was all he cared for, nor would he with any patience analyze even those. So far as his art and aim went, I was able entirely to sympathize with him; and we both liked, in one way or another, exactly the same sorts of things, so that he didn't want to go and draw the marshes at Mantua when I wanted to draw Monte Monterone —but we could always sit down to work within a dozen yards of each other, both pleased. I did not mind his laughing at me for poring into the foreground weeds, which he thought sufficiently expressed by a zigzag; and heartily admired in him the brilliancy of easy skill,

which secured, and with emphasis, in an hour or two, the effect of scenes I could never have attempted.

His time in travelling was of course professionally too valuable to him to admit of much study in galleries, which, for the rest, when a painter's manner is once fixed, usually does him more hurt than good). But he generally went with me on my exploring days in Venice, and we saw the Scuola di San Rocco together, and both of us for the first time. My companion, though by no means modest as to his own powers, was (partly for that very reason, his confidence in them being well grounded,) quite frank and candid in his admiration of stronger painters; and when we had got through the upper gallery, and into the room of the Crucifixion, we both sate down and looked—not at it—but at each other,—literally the strength so taken out of us that we couldn't stand.

When we came away, Harding said that he felt like a whipped schoolboy. I, not having been at school so long as he, felt only that a new world was opened to me, that I had seen that day the Art of Man in its full majesty for the first time; and that there was also a strange and precious gift in myself enabling me to recognise it, and therein ennobling, not crushing me. That sense of my own gift and function as an interpreter strengthened as I grew older; and supports, and I believe justifies me now in accepting, in this last cycle of life, the responsibilities lately once more offered to me in Oxford.

The public estimate of me, so far as it is wise at all, and not grounded merely on my manner of writing, is, I think, chiefly as an illustrator of natural beauty. They had as much illustration of it before as they needed, one would have thought, and if not enough to their taste in Chaucer or Spenser, in Byron or

Scott,--at all events in their own contemporary poets. Tennyson's 'Brook' is far beyond anything I ever did, or could have done, in beauty of description; and the entire power of natural scenes on the constant feelings of the human heart is taught, (and perfectly,) by Longfellow in 'Hiawatha.' But I say with pride which it has become my duty to express openly, that it was left to me, and to me alone, first to discern, and then to teach, so far as in this hurried century any such thing *can* be taught, the excellency and supremacy of five great painters, despised until I spoke of them,--Turner, Tintoret, Luini, Botticelli, and Carpaccio. Despised,—nay, scarcely in any true sense of the word, known. I think, before the year 1874, in which I began work on the frescoes of Botticelli and Perugino in the Sistine Chapel, there will scarcely be found so much as a notice of their existence in the diary of any traveller, and there was no consciousness of their

existence in the entire mind of modern Rome. They are little enough noticed *now;* and yet, in London, Turner's most precious drawings are kept in the cellar of the National Gallery: —nevertheless, my work is done; and so far as the English nation studies the Arts at all, will tell, in its due time.

The reader who has had patience with these personal details, thus far, will understand now the temper in which, on my return to England, I wrote the second volume of 'Modern Painters,' and the extreme prominence given to Tintoret in the closing sections of it. The short addenda which provoked this garrulous epilogue will also, I think, become of more interest to him, not only as indicating my earliest assumption of the office of censor to the Royal Academy! but as marking very notably the honest and frank tone of criticism itself in that day. The anonymous character of the author of 'Modern Painters' was, by the time

those addenda were published, entirely waived to the general body of artists: but, whatever I chose to say of them, Prout, Stanfield, and Turner used to dine with my father on my birthday; the two first were always at home to me, and I had a happy little talk with Stanfield one day when he was at work on his last picture. Charles Robert Leslie, Mulready, and David Roberts, used to come sometimes on the birthday also, and it was certainly not the Academy Notes of after years, but the Pre-Raphaelite schism, and most of all Turner's death, which broke my relations with the Royal Academy. I hope they may in future be kinder; its President has just lent me two lovely drawings for the Oxford schools, and I think, feels with me as to all the main principles of Art Education.

THE END.

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